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THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

THE PARTY'S OVER

by Kate Coleman with Paul Avery

"Black Panthers have committed a series of violent crimes over the last several years. Now, disaffected Panther Party intimates and others have told *New Times* about the scope and nature of this violence — about arson, extortion, beatings, even murder. There appears to be no political explanation for it; the Party is no longer under siege by the police, and this is not self-defense. It seems to be nothing but senseless criminality, directed in most cases at other blacks. There is even a secret wing of the Panthers, [illegible] known within the Party as 'the Squad,' to [illegible] r the brutality. And at the center [illegible] Panther founder Huey P. Newton."

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But do you need Ferri-Chrome? Some say that only the Verri-Crazy can tell the difference. But it's nice to know that the difference is there—if you have the ears to hear it.

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NewTimes

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NewTimes

"Black Panthers have committed a series of violent crimes over the last several years. Now, disaffected Panther Party intimates and others have told *New Times* about the scope and nature of this violence — about arson, extortion, beatings, even murder. There appears to be no political explanation for it; the Party is no longer under siege by the police, and this is not self-defense. It seems to be nothing but senseless criminality, directed in most cases at other blacks. There is even a secret wing of the Panthers, known within the Party as 'the Squad,' to administer the brutality. And at the center of it all is Panther founder Huey P. Newton."

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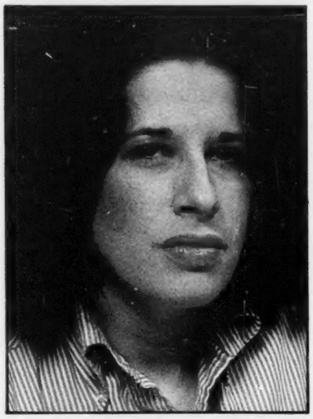
The hottest act in America this week is an essayist who has a bone to pick with everything that's stupid, tacky and self-indulgent about everyone you know. Why are TV talk show viewers shelling out $8.50 for *Metropolitan Life*, a book that insults them on every page? Not even her agent knows for sure.
by PAUL RUDNICK



54 The Iceberg Cometh

In Saudi Arabia there's this desert, see, and it's, well, it's a desert, so there's no water. Now, way down south there's this iceberg: cold, wet and big as all get out. Now, if you melt the iceberg you get water, so why not just tow the iceberg to the desert. The problem is: How do you tow an iceberg?
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RUM REVELATIONS.

Surprising facts every rum drinker should know.

Ah, what rum drinkers don't know about rum. So Myers's thinks it's time to raise some eyebrows.

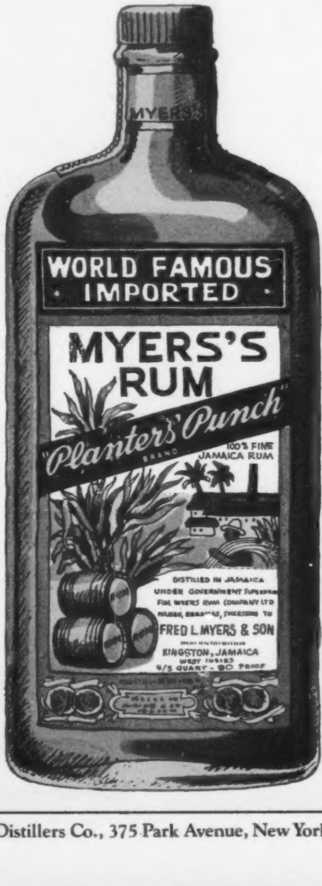
The first fact of rum. Rum comes in three shades: white, gold, and dark. Some light rums are blended to have a barely noticeable taste. Their flavor might fade in the drink. But Myers's is blended specially to be more flavorful. The Myers's comes through the mixer.

Another surprise.
Dark rum isn't any stronger than light rum. Both are the same alcoholic proof. So Myers's isn't any stronger, even though it has a tastier rum flavor.

More revelations.
Myers's is more expensive. It's imported from Jamaica where it's made slowly, in small batches. The richer taste is worth the time. And the price.

Still another little known fact.
Caribbean bartenders mix Myers's into exotic drinks made with lighter rums. They trust Myers's to enhance the flavor. So discover for yourself the dash that Myers's adds to a simple Rum & Cola. The extra punch Myers's adds to a Planters' Punch. Here are the recipes for your pleasure.

Myers's Planters' Punch:
Combine in shaker, 3 oz. orange juice, juice of ½ lemon or lime, 1½ oz. Myers's. Add 1 tsp. superfine sugar and dash of grenadine. Shake well and serve in tall glass filled with ice. Add orange slice, cherry.



Myers's Rum and Cola:
Into a highball glass, add 1½ oz. Myers's Rum. Fill glass with cola beverage. Add slice of lemon or lime, and stir.

And finally, one last point.
Dark rum is better to use in cooking than light rum. Myers's adds a fuller rum flavor to foods. Try sprinkling Myers's over grapefruit halves. It's a simple way to create an interesting first course. Myers's makes so many rum recipes even more delicious.

So now that you know the facts, your choice should be clear: Myers's Rum.

Because if you like rum, it's time you discovered the pleasures that wait for you in the dark.

Next to Myers's All other Rums Seem Pale.

Imported by Seagram Distillers Co., 375 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022, 80 Proof.

LETTERS

Organic Optimism

Daniel Zwerdling's article "Can U.S. Farmers Kick the Petrochemical Habit?" offers the direction we owe our children after the ignorant and arrogant way our lands have been raped by irresponsible, short-sighted, greedy persons in the chemical industry. To find that the organic method is outshining the chemical in every way and, even more, that the word is being published in a major magazine... that's cause for celebration.

Thanks for your optimistic reporting.

Brenda Kinsel
Los Angeles, California

Kudos for Kopkind

I am writing this letter to express my gratitude for the excellent article written by Andrew Kopkind in your June 12 issue, entitled "Europe's Reign of Terror." It was by far the most comprehensive and best-written article I have read about terrorism in Europe, especially Germany, the country of my birth. Living in the U.S., one is not exactly well informed about what goes on over there. Mr. Kopkind's article has closed quite a few gaps.

Gisela Bollenbach
New York City

Herpes Complex

I found your article "The Herpes Epidemic" (May 12) to be enlightening, informative and depressing. I find Dr. Stolar's attitude unbelievable ("herpes is seldom a very dangerous disease..."). Given possible risks of cervical cancer and encephalitis, I would think herpes qualifies as being "very dangerous."

If I contract this disease I hope I am lucky enough to be treated by a doctor with a less cavalier attitude.

Nicholas E. Tulloh
Key West, Florida

Paraquarrel

Dr. Peter Bourne is unnecessarily vilified in "Beyond Paraquat" (The Insider, May 29). He, and others like him, are products of the system that spawned them—a system that can protect us from a substance that can cause cancer if we ingest the equivalent of a thousand hot dogs, yet can be blind to the immediate danger of paraquat.

New Times could be a little more understanding of Dr. Bourne's position. It was enough trouble to start the paraquat program; it will probably take an army of civil service workers and a truckload of paperwork just to stop the damn thing.

Out here in the Midwest, we never did believe those fast-talking liberal politicians who said government was good for us. Forgive us for being smug at times.

Mike Faust
Omaha, Nebraska

Dear Landlords

I'm willing to bet a month's rent that not one Californian's rent will be lowered now that Proposition 13 has passed. Landlords don't care about renters; landlords only care about money.

If the world's air supply could all be bottled and sold at exorbitant prices, landlords would do it. Then we'd have two new classes: rich airlords and poor breathers.

M. Dodd
Marysville, Pennsylvania

Catch-up Ball

Your article concerning Jim Bouton's attempted comeback in professional baseball was truly beautiful. Hopefully it will be matched by another article describing his success.

From one who has read his book, *Ball Four*, Jim Bouton was, is and will continue to be a success, whether his comeback is complete or not—for he is a success as a man.

Dr. Charles M. Tuffiash
San Antonio, Texas

One Grave, One Vote

Don't be so quick to attribute another first to the great state of California. We Louisianans are innovative, too. In your piece on Lowell Darling (The Insider, June 12), you say that his "terminal ballot" would make Californians the first Americans able to cast a vote beyond the grave. Well, dead people have been voting for years in some Louisiana parishes, but we never thought of it as a "terminal ballot." We always called it "vote fraud." And unlike California, we've been trying to get rid of it.

Dianne E. Loupe
Hammond, Louisiana

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(Justin Hayward • Ray Thomas • Graeme Edge • John Lodge • Michael Pinder)

their all NEW studio recording...

"OCTAVE".

THE
MOODY BLUES
Octave

And *only* on

LONDON®
RECORDS & TAPES

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Party Lines/by Robert Shrum

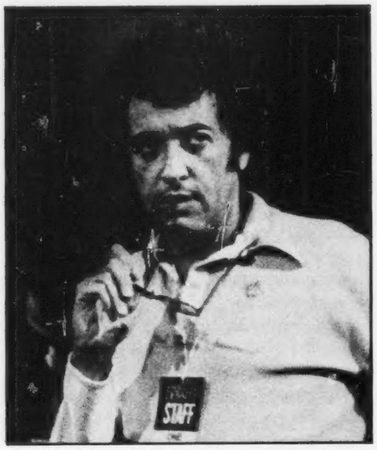
JERRY RAFSHOON'S MINISTRY OF PROPAGANDA

As Jerry Rafshoon fondly told the story during the 1976 campaign, Rosalynn Carter used to let Jimmy study his polls for a while on the rare evenings when they were together that year. But after a half-hour or so, she would tell him to stop reading and ask everyone else to leave so Jimmy could come to bed. The candidate dutifully listened to her. Jimmy Carter takes his wife's words—not only in their private life, but on politics and public policy as well.

This May, Rosalynn Carter studied her husband's plunging approval ratings and suggested that maybe he should bring on Rafshoon, a professional ad man and Carter's long-time media adviser, as a White House assistant to help Jimmy get out of his slump. Once again, the President followed his First Lady's advice. And now from his office in the West Wing, a city block and $60,000 in salary away from his public relations firm, the irreverent, fast-talking Rafshoon is remodeling the White House press and public relations operation.

"There hasn't been enough opportunity to coordinate communication on the issues," Rafshoon says. "People around here are coming from all different directions." Initially, Press Secretary Jody Powell was supposed to coordinate the Carter Administration's message to the media. But though he's quick and clever, he's also notoriously disorganized. "He has all he can handle with the day-to-day press," explains Rafshoon, who's now playing strategist to Powell's tactician.

Rafshoon's assignment, though he himself wouldn't choose to describe it this way, is to make the President appear as competent as possible. A coherent image is prudent politics for any president. It's a near necessity for Carter, who seems out of focus and out of his depth. "We need to articulate the themes of his presidency," Rafshoon argues, "to put things under an umbrella," to convey "an overall purpose." He cites Carter's speeches to date as a paradigm of communicative chaos: "If you looked at a book [of them], you could not say that they were all given by the same person." To curb the cacophony, Rafshoon intends to change not only the speechwriting process but the speechwriters themselves: "We need to get some people out of the speechwriting business and some people in."



Jerry Rafshoon: To Carter's rescue?

Photograph by Charles Rafshoon

Rafshoon has other Administration discords to smooth out. A White House source reports that he wants Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski to quit airing their disagreements on television interview shows: "It doesn't look very competent to have two different foreign policies." Rafshoon denies that he plans "to control that." The source replies: "Well, let's just say that he's suggested it."

Rafshoon, though, wasn't brought into the White House simply to patch up the worst potholes in the Administration's public relations. He is to be Carter's master draftsman on the image front. "It was announced that I'd have four or five key priorities," he recalls, "so I've been approached by 60 people, all of whom think their issue is one of the four or five." Rafshoon has his own list—"inflation, civil service reform and foreign policy." For the next five or six months, he believes, the President has to concentrate on them, instead of wandering around the smorgasbord of national issues.

A disgruntled presidential assistant, whose priority isn't on Rafshoon's list, complains that "it's solely a function of pollster Pat Caddell's surveys." Rafshoon scoffs at the charge: "I don't pick the issues." The President does, he deferentially explains, adding a little testily that "some of them—the economy, for instance—are obvious." But it's certain that Rafshoon will try to use the polling data to dress up Carter's preferences. "We're going to relate as much as we can to the anti-spending, anti-taxing mood," a White House aide predicts. Thus, if the President vetoes the new water projects bill, he will de-emphasive the environmental reasons, point to its cost and contend that it would contribute to inflation.

Rafshoon doesn't pretend that he's in the White House to put a slight gloss on the best of all possible P.R. operations. He admits, for instance, that Carter's failure to address the national mayors' conference in June, or to offer Vice President Mondale as a substitute, was a mistake. The mayors slapped back by inviting the man who could be president, Edward Kennedy, instead; only then did a White House desperate to save face agree to send Mondale. Part of Rafshoon's mandate is to see that this doesn't happen again. "Schedules should be worked into themes," he says.

But remaking Carter's image isn't just a matter of re-tooled mechanics, reborn eloquence and a little political sensitivity. Rafshoon insists that the national mood isn't exactly receptive to Carter's more activist goals: "That's the big problem that the Administration has. There are a lot of things that we came into office committed to and wanting to do—but there [are] economic realities right now."

Rafshoon insists that image isn't everything—that "performance and the way things turn out are ultimately going to have the greatest bearing." As he talks, though, Rafshoon subtly massages the President's image. There's a popular impression that Carter overrelies on his good old boys. So while discussing speechwriting, Rafshoon pre-emptively counters that "we're going to reach out and get some outside help." And if the President's approval rating doesn't rise, will that be a reflection of faltering performance? "It's a slow process," he replies: It takes time to turn the polls around after an image settles in. And if Carter's ratings stay low, he implies, it could be because the President's performance is too, too good: "If he keeps making tougher political decisions, decisions that fly in the face of politics . . . [the polls] may go even lower."

Undeniably, Jerry Rafshoon is a P.R. man. With his half-unbuttoned

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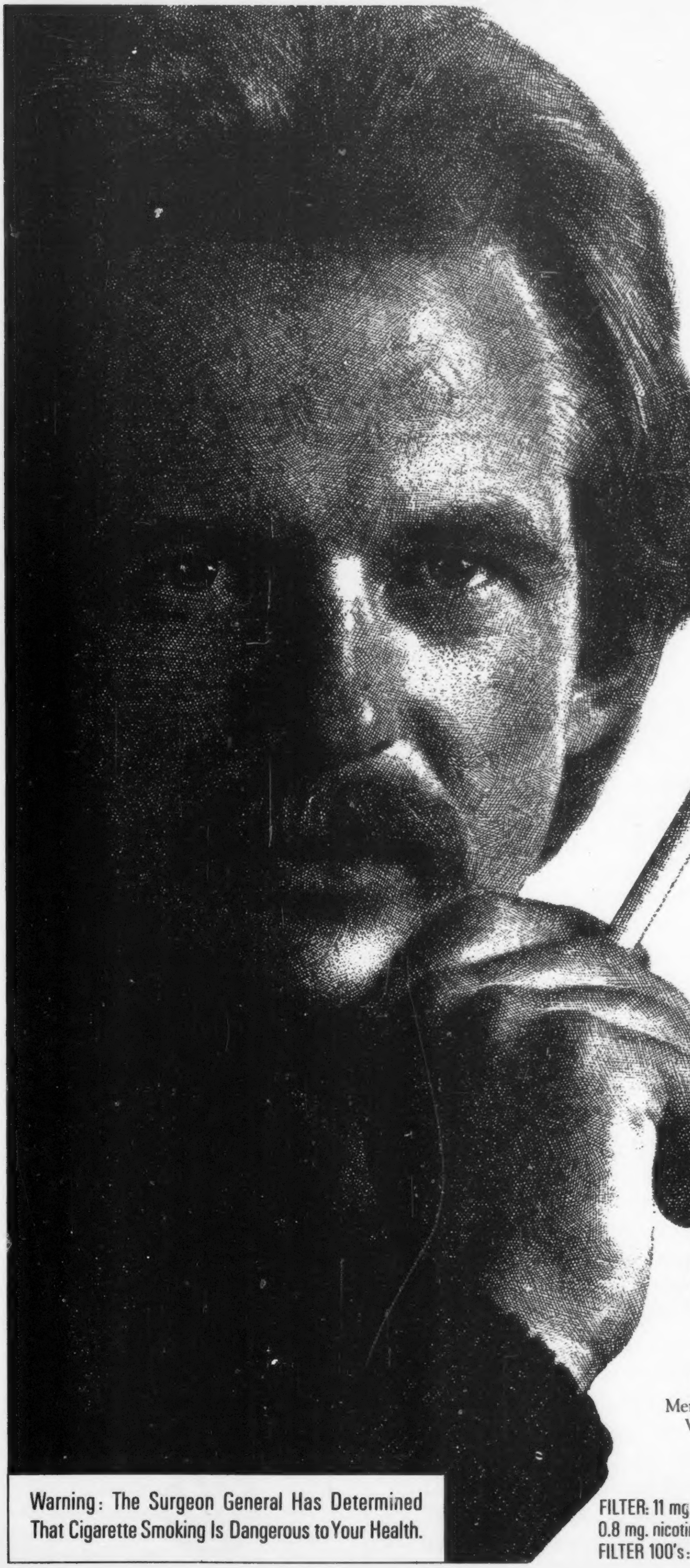

'Why I choose to smoke.'

"Why kid anyone? I smoke because I enjoy it. I'm the kind of guy who gets pleasure out of a cigarette. But I'm not deaf to what's being said about tar.

"So I searched out a cigarette that would give me taste with low tar. And two years ago I found it in Vantage. Vantage has all the taste I enjoy yet, surprisingly, much less tar than my old brand.

"Why did I choose Vantage? Because I like it."

Michael D Epperson

Michael Epperson
Miami, Florida

VANTAGE
100's
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Regular,
Menthol, and
Vantage 100's

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

FILTER: 11 mg. "tar", 0.7 mg. nicotine, MENTHOL: 11 mg. "tar", 0.8 mg. nicotine, av. per cigarette, FTC Report AUG. '77; FILTER 100's: 11 mg. "tar", 0.9 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

REGGIE JACKSON DRIVES A RABBIT??

Reggie appreciates the finer things in life.

He has a collection of fine cars, including a Rolls-Royce, but the car he really depends on is his VW Rabbit. Why?

"Because it holds everything I want it to hold. And it does everything I want it to do."

That's high praise, coming from a man who re-wrote baseball history. And who can clearly afford to drive any car (or cars) he pleases.

It's also high praise coming from a man who's 6′ 2″, weighs 210 pounds and doesn't like his style cramped. By any body or any thing.

We understand exactly why he's so impressed: Rabbit has more trunk space and glass area than a Cadillac Seville. And more people room than 40 other cars on the market.

Reggie knows enough about cars to appreciate Rabbit's front-wheel drive for better tracking, especially in bad weather. To say nothing of front disc brakes, an independent stabilizer rear axle and rack-and-pinion steering.

He also knows magic when he sees it; his Rabbit "L" is the only car he could buy that has seat belts that actually put themselves on.

It's an impressive list, to say the least. But Reggie, in his own way, says it most:

"The only one I have to impress—is me."

VOLKSWAGEN DOES IT AGAIN

©VOLKSWAGEN OF AMERICA, INC.

shirt often exposing his gray-flecked chest, he looks the part. He's been one ever since he produced the kind of commercials that flack the latest horror movie on late night television. And at the White House he still thinks like a P.R. man. As a source describes Rafshoon's newest ad campaign, Jimmy will concentrate on the competence, and Rosalynn and Miss Lillian will take care of the compassion by visiting the disadvantaged. (The First Lady recently rode the subway in the rain to D.C. General Hospital, where she volunteered to help paint peeling walls.)

Pulling out a standard ploy of the ad business—and a troubled White House—Rafshoon is even willing to concede the past. He says that he wasn't surprised Carter had problems early on, but that by now the President and "everybody around here has learned quite a bit." But Jerry Rafshoon's Operation Competence can't succeed any better than Ron Ziegler's Operation Candor did if it's all strategy and no substance. After a while, it sounds thin to hear that the President will do better, the polls will go up, and the newest trick will turn the corner—if nothing actually improves. But of course Nixon couldn't be candid and survive; maybe, just maybe, Carter can be competent.

Lyndon Johnson's assistant Jack Valenti, the first professional P.R. man ever to serve on a presidential staff, has confided to friends that the White House goofed in making Rafshoon's role so transparent—it doesn't brighten a president's image to announce that he's hired an ad man to make it gleam. Yet all modern presidents have had such men, even if they've usually been amateurs claiming that they're just there to answer questions and provide facts. But this Administration already has enough amateurs.

At least Rafshoon is professional enough to have a sense of proportion, a touch of self-mockery. You wouldn't believe all his ads—but he doesn't believe them either. Asked what he hopes to have accomplished six months from now, he momentarily spouts a standard piety—"to have the public have a better understanding of this Administration"—and then he laughs at himself aloud. He admits that what he's doing is basically the same job he did as Carter's media man in the 1976 campaign, but wisecracks that there is a difference: "It would be hard to do commercials. We don't have the budget. And I don't know who'd give either." What Jerry Rafshoon obviously hopes is that after a year or so of his ministry of propaganda, they'll be lining up to give—say, 10 or 12 weeks before the New Hampshire primary. ●

ADDENDUM & ERRATUM

Congress Joins the Cancer War. Last November, we printed Ruth Rosenbaum's story "Why We Are Losing The War On Cancer" (*NT*, 11/25/77), which told how the American cancer establishment spends millions of research dollars foolishly and arrogantly, with little to show for it. Now five U.S. senators have indicated they want some answers from cancer researchers before appropriating more funds.

At a Senate subcommittee hearing in June, the unlikely duo of George McGovern and Robert Dole, joined by three other senators, challenged the researchers in a way they had grown not to expect from congressional committees. "I have a suspicion," McGovern said, "that we're losing the war on cancer because of mistaken priorities and misallocation of funds." He wondered why more attention wasn't being paid to cancer prevention, in view of evidence that diet and other environmental factors might cause the majority of cancers. And Dole, noting the requests for still more federal funds, asked the scientists just where they thought the millions of dollars would come from.

Nixon's Last Laugh. It goes to show, you can't keep a good man down. Just as everyone was chortling about what a dud Nixon's memoirs would be (we contributed to the general hilarity with a comic-book parody of them in our May 15 issue), what should show up on the *New York Times* Best Sellers list but—can it be?—*that book.* It first hit the list June 4, in the number four spot, and in successive weeks was number two, four and three. Nixon, of course, is no stranger to triumphing in the face of adversity, and we can only assume he was unfazed by the "Boycott Books By Crooks" T-shirts, the snide reviews and the shenanigans of some bookstore owners. (Bookshop Santa Cruz, in Santa Cruz, California, sold the memoirs at $1.69 a pound, the price of bologna.) No, Nixon could afford to ignore the slew of insults and attacks. After all, his book is a best seller now, you can't argue with that—although perhaps one could quibble that it doesn't belong on a nonfiction list.

The Oranging of America. Of all the pesticides that have aroused public passions, none has ignited more controversy than the herbicide 2,4,5-T and the deadly chemical it contains, dioxin. In our August 5, 1977, issue, Daniel Zwerdling told the history of Agent Orange, the 2,4,5-T formulation that U.S. war planes sprayed in massive quantities to defoliate jungles and croplands during the Vietnam War. Zwerdling reported that 2,4,5-T and dioxin threaten public health in the United States as the herbicide continues to be sprayed over millions of acres of national forests and pasture lands. For eight years, the Environmental Protection Agency has refused widespread public demands to ban 2,4,5-T, despite evidence that dioxin kills animals and deforms their offspring at smaller doses than practically any toxin known, and despite evidence that dioxin is accumulating in beef and even human mothers' milk.

Now there is new evidence against the herbicide poison. Studies by Dow Chemical Company, the major manufacturer of 2,4,5-T, and the National Institutes of Health show that 2,4,5-T and dioxin cause liver and lung cancers and leukemia in laboratory animals.

For years, the Pentagon discounted reports that the herbicide caused illness and birth defects among Vietnam villagers. Now, military spokesmen are having to answer charges from veterans who say they, too, were affected by 2,4,5-T. In Chicago, WBBM-TV reports that 40 Vietnam veterans in the area, all of whom say they were exposed to Agent Orange, are suffering bizarre illnesses they say their doctors can't explain—including persistent rashes, diminished sex drive and psychological problems. Among the Chicago veterans, a woman who served as a secretary in Vietnam—and who says she was also exposed to the herbicide—has suffered spontaneous abortions. There is no proof that Agent Orange caused these problems. (The U.S. Center for Disease Control has just launched an investigation.) But some scientists are worried—because these symptoms are similar to those reported among Vietnamese villagers, as well as those documented in industrial accidents involving 2,4,5-T and dioxin. The EPA has announced it is starting official proceedings to consider banning the herbicide once and for all.

Grass Roots/by Harvey Wasserman

THE MOVEMENT TAKES OFF

Late in March the world watched in amazement as a half-dozen young Japanese smashed the New Tokyo International Airport control tower at Narita to smithereens.

Within two months the air field began functioning—after a fashion—and the world press, which never offered much explanation of the fight to begin with, lost interest. But as the thousands of riot police who remained inside the airport can testify, the battle is far from over.

The battle is also far from over at Seabrook, New Hampshire, where construction of two huge atomic reactors has become a movement symbol. Late in June, a four-day legal occupation at the site attracted hordes of nuclear opponents.

Though their tactics have been a world apart, the Sanrizuka and Seabrook movements have crucial common elements that may define much of grass roots political activism for some time to come. And like so much else in Asia—and here—it all began with Vietnam.

In the mid-sixties, Tokyo's aging Haneda International Airport was clogged by burgeoning commercial traffic—and by American troop and supply carriers bound to and from the Vietnam War. The idea of expanding Haneda—a simple proposition—had been kicked around for quite a while, but in 1966 the government finally decided to build a new facility.

Some say the decision stemmed from national pride, the desire for Japan to have a shining new technological gateway. Others charge corruption, citing reports that two ruling Liberal Democratic Party heavyweights got rich as a result of land speculation based on inside knowledge of the site.

Whatever the case, Japanese officials rode a helicopter over the rich farmland of Chiba Prefecture and decided it was as good a place as any to drop a $200 million, three-square-mile-plus aviation center.

The first site chosen was the village of Tomisato. But with a long history of social rebellion, the Tomisato peasants put on such a quick and ferocious display of displeasure that the government hastily opted for nearby Sanrizuka.

Sanrizuka had several advantages, not the least of which was that roughly one third of the needed land could come directly from the Emperor's traditional grazing lands. Hirohito was not likely to object. The rest of the site was occupied by peasants who had been resettled there after World War II, and the government and its semiofficial airport corporation—Kodan—apparently believed that these "newcomer" farmers would not be adverse to leaving.

Airport '78: Opposition leader Issaku Tomura deploys his troops

They were wrong. "I began to clear the land in 1946 and 1947," says Ishii Takeshi, a local farmer. "Then I got married and had children. When we settled here, we were unable to make a living."

For years Ishii and others like him borrowed money and basic tools to eke a bare living out of their fields. Some worked other jobs by day and laboriously tilled their soil at night, often with forks and hoes borrowed from neighbors and relatives. After two decades, and despite bad advice from government agricultural officials, the Sanrizuka peasants had managed to dig in. "We were beginning to have some bright outlook for a steady living ahead," says Ishii, "when the airport problem caught us by surprise."

On June 22, 1966, the government announced—through the newspapers—that the land would be taken for the new airport, and the response was fury. Within a week 1,500 local farmers had met in a rainstorm to warn the government: "If they try to enforce this construction on us, they will be driven into a corner and forced to dig their own grave."

The government had, indeed, broken a cardinal rule of Japanese politics. Though the national system is extremely centralized, there is nonetheless a long tradition of cultivating local consensus before proceeding with major projects. A painful ritual of gaining agreement and adjusting compensation must be acted out before community life can be disturbed.

But this time, oversight, haste or pure arrogance caused the government to push ahead without even formal notification. In summer of 1967, two solid months of fighting broke out between the peasants and police guarding the survey teams. By the fall, Kodan was forced to bring in 2,000 riot police. By November the Hantai Domei (Opposition League) had rallied 8,000 people at the Sanrizuka site. And in the summer of 1970 the resistance met police with three full-scale wooden fortresses, a massive underground tunnel system capable of housing 40 people, and a barrage of garbage, burning tires, bamboo spears and rocks aimed at halting Kodan's final survey. It took another year of pitched battles—and the death of three riot police—before Kodan could finally claim full possession of the land for the first of three planned runways. As they did, a 22-year-old member of the resistance league committed ritual suicide.

The passion of the farmers was amply matched by thousands of radical students who had joined the ranks of the airport resistance. In 1960 students had fought bitterly against the

Photograph: Black Star

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American-Japanese Security Pact, which gave the U.S. military virtually unlimited use of Japanese land and airspace. In opposition the students staged wild, fiery demonstrations in the streets and at Haneda, forcing Dwight Eisenhower to cancel a much-publicized visit, and costing the Japanese government incalculable face. Seeing the Narita airport as yet another extension of U.S. imperialism, many factions of the Japanese student movement jumped in eagerly in the late sixties to support the Sanrizuka peasants.

The farmers, in turn, demanded that the students drop their notorious sectarian warfare, at least when in Narita. And they adopted a common analysis. "We are fighting in solidarity with the peasants of Vietnam," Issaku Tomura, the grandfatherly leader of the Hantai Domei told me in 1975. "This fight, like theirs, is for the right of farmers to survive. This airport is nothing but a further extension of the industrial system at the expense of agriculture. How will this country feed itself?"

The supremely embarrassing March sabotage focused attention not only on the shortcomings of the 14,000 riot police stationed as guards, but also the $2.5 billion airport's numerous deficiencies. Charges have surfaced that much of the facility's equipment is already out of date, and that the single Narita runway—three were originally planned, but two are still blocked by the farmers—cannot adequately cope with strong crosswinds, a condition expected to close the airport at least three times a year. Lack of land and a miscalculation also forced engineers to build approach lighting towers on the runway rather than in front of it, effectively reducing the strip's length by some 800 feet. And the noise problem had been seriously underestimated.

Within a week after Narita's inauguration in May—seven years and at least 10 "official opening dates" late—the government quietly announced it was expanding the runways at Haneda, a feat it had previously labeled impossible. The official explanation was that the new runways would alleviate noise problems in Tokyo, but the major newspapers were quick to speculate that the government was hedging its bets.

The Narita fight has spurred a popular movement that is now shaking the archipelago to its roots. "Our people are not used to fighting authority," explains a professor active in Japan's growing anti-nuclear movement. "Sanrizuka has shown them it can be done."

Throughout Japan, industrial projects ranging from chemical plants to oil refineries to fossil and nuclear power plants are meeting stiff resistance from local farmers and fishing people. The urban leftist organizations that trace their roots to the student movement in the sixties now consist largely of young working people who left school and took their politics with them. Though radical activists are usually identified as "students," the guerrillas who smashed the Narita tower were mostly working people, including some civil servants. Not a few of today's Sanrizuka farmers came as organizers and stayed to pursue organic farming and cooperative marketing.

"Our people are not used to fighting authority. Sanrizuka has shown them it can be done"

The same pattern has become familiar in the U.S. The 1978 "spring offensive" against nuclear bombs and reactors marked a rebirth of American activism built largely on the old antiwar constituency, but with a heavy local base. The confrontation at Seabrook was built from the start on conservative locals enraged by the project. The Public Service Company of New Hampshire, which is building the twin reactors, has appropriated Seabrook's land and water, taken the town to court over taxes, upped electric rates and thumbed its nose at three town votes against the plant.

From the grass roots anger grew the Clamshell Alliance idea that construction could eventually be stopped with direct action. The Seabrook movement is deeply committed to nonviolence; the Sanrizuka campaign obviously is not. But in both cases, a hard core of traditionally conservative local resistance has been joined by a growing movement of urban and ex-urban activists to fight industrial projects as bad as—or worse than—predicted.

The trend is not about to disappear. Nuclear construction may continue at Seabrook, but its builders are running a tough race with financial bankruptcy and an opposition approaching critical mass.

As for the opening of the Narita airport, the Hantai Domei seems serenely unaffected. "This changes nothing," says Tomura. "We've fought for 12 years. Do you think we'll stop now?"

Not likely.

So if you're passing through New Hampshire, stop in and visit the local Clams. And if you must travel to Japan, get a flight to Osaka. Or go by boat. ●

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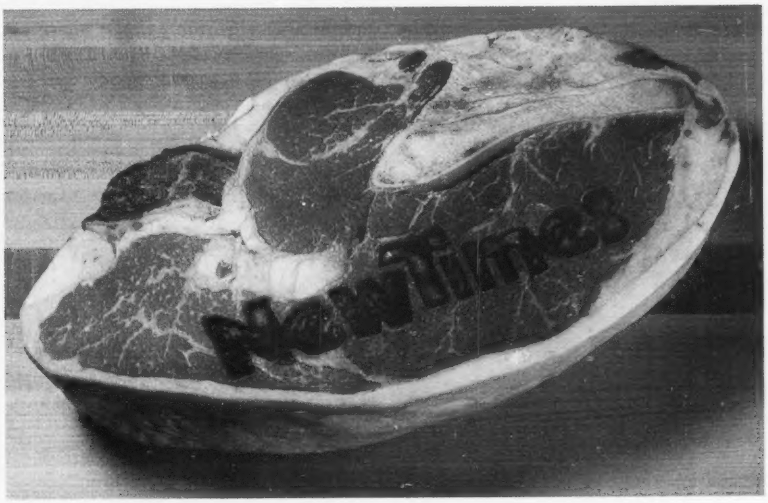


In Moscow, Ali seemed suddenly to recall Nikki. His eyes glazed, his cheeks puffed, and for a moment he considered banging a shoe. "I will bury him," the 'outstanding American Negro spokesman' said of Leon Spinks (Thanks to Tass)

The Insider

HACKING THROUGH THE WASHINGTON BRUSH

Saved from the dump

WIDE WORLD

In the spring of 1967, Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) resolved at its national convention not to support the renomination of Lyndon Johnson in 1968. It was one of the first signals of the power of the antiwar movement. This year it almost happened again. A resolution drafted by ADA leaders to be put before their convention would have announced that the group could "not support Jimmy Carter for renomination in 1980 unless he makes progress toward keeping the promises he made in 1976." But several ADA leaders, including the organization's outgoing president, Senator George McGovern, insisted it was a year too early for the break. The draft was amended to express the liberals' dissatisfaction without threatening to oppose Carter outright.

Ronnie among the nightingales

WIDE WORLD

Ronald Reagan's operatives are planning a "moderate" (for him) strategy for his 1980 presidential candidacy, which one of Reagan's top advisers rates as "a 90 percent probability." The central plank of the Reagan platform will be a massive reduction of federal taxes without specifying which federal programs would be cut. "If Jarvis can do it," says the Reagan adviser, "so can we. Reagan can be the Proposition 13 candidate on a national scale." Reagan intends to avoid ideological red flags like his ill-fated 1976 $90 billion plan, which so drastically cut federal spending that it scared even Republicans. Reagan's men figure he can run *against* Carter's "incompetence" and *for* a tax-cut—and for little else—without sacrificing right-wing support. "He doesn't have to prove himself to conservatives," says one.

Dancing in the dark

Cuban Envoy Confides Bafflement Toward Carter African Policy

President Carter has, of course, accused the Cubans of deep involvement in the invasion of Zaire. In refuting that contention to U.S. officials, Cubans in Washington have revealed some fascinating intelligence information, which we've been able to pick up.

Convincing a U.S. official of his nation's lack of complicity, chief Cuban liaison Ramon Sanchez-Parodi confided that the Castro government had carefully rechecked on its forces in Angola (the country from which the invasion was launched) and concluded that the Katangan rebels had not received assistance or advice—authorized or unauthorized—from the Cubans stationed there. "None [of the Cubans] had gone off on their own," he said. Parodi insisted that the CIA could not have hard evidence of *any* Cuban involvement: "We don't even supply medical aid to the Katangans." Parodi said that not only did the Cubans no longer have "any direct contact" with the Katangans, but that they no longer share political objectives. The Katangans, he pointed out, had been held primarily responsible for the murder of Patrice Lumumba, the Marxist prime minister of the Congo (now Zaire).

At his June 14 press conference, Carter didn't repeat his accusation that Cuba *helped* the rebels, but instead blamed Castro for not stopping the invasion. Parodi answered that this would have been nearly impossible—the Angolan regime of Dr. Agostinho Neto doesn't have effective control over the 15,000 Katangans. Parodi claimed the Cubans had evidence showing that interests in Western Europe were providing aid and training for the rebels.

The Cubans contend they take the U.S. at its word in its support of black majority rule in Africa, an objective they share. So Parodi tweaked America by suggesting that the U.S., Great Britian and Cuba work as an ensemble in Africa. Under Parodi's taunting plan, the Americans and British would apply diplomatic and economic pressure for black rule, and the Cubans would do their part by threatening to back up the pressure with military.

Finally, Parodi told the U.S. official that he found President Carter's to be a most confusing administration. He remembered, he said, that soon after the President's initial May 25 charge that the Cubans had spurred the Zaire invasion, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance held a previously scheduled secret meeting with Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez. The meeting was at the United Nations. To Rodriguez's shock, Vance was unaware of Carter's charge—indeed, he seemed nonplussed upon hearing it from the Cuban. The going definition among the Cubans for the Carter Administration, says one source, is "very strange."

—Robert Shrum

UPI

Zaire defenders: The Cubans love'em

Carter Health Dilemma: Make It Work But Make It Cheap

The Carter Administration's nearing the time when a proposal for a national health policy will become inevitable. Committed to the concept of national health insurance thanks to effusive campaign commitments to—among others—Leonard Woodcock, Carter will have to come up with a plan that won't appear negligible and won't run counter to the current anti-government mania.

One option being tossed around would be to undercut Carter's symbolic involvement in such a plan by having HEW Secretary Joseph Califano announce it. This might insult and infuriate the UAW, involved with the measure to the point of identification, but the White House has other points it could yield in return.

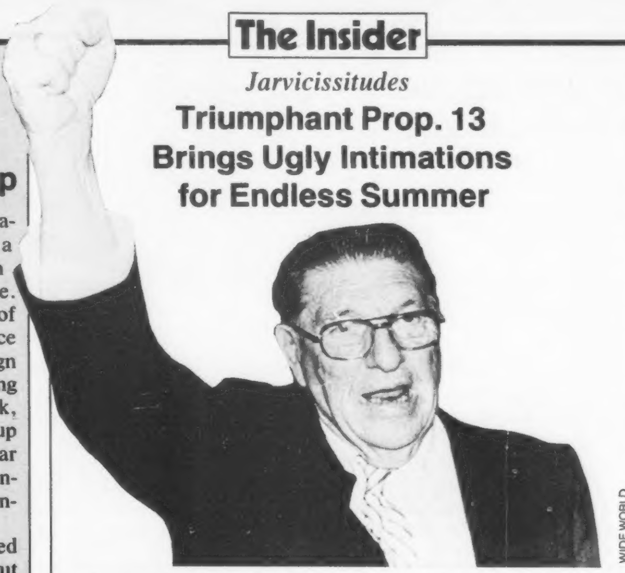
One Carter concession is the cost-control formula. The UAW wants Carter's proposal to tie cost controls to the consumer price index. (The consumer price index is increasing, but not nearly as fast as the price of health services.) Some White House officials—worried about further angering the medical community—seek controls tied to a separate medical price index.

Many points of the Carter health plan are already set. It will insure medical services comprehensively —Senator Edward Kennedy insisted on that. But great pains have been taken to limit short-run costs by a phasing-in of the coverage: The UAW and the Administration are intent that it should take full effect shortly after the next election. Even then it's not completely safe. The objective of such fine tuning is basic and political: Carter wants to satisfy the liberals' demand for a comprehensive program while salvaging his image as a budgetary tough guy. "Then," a Carter adviser says, "he can harp on how little the plan would cost." And more pressure: OMB head James McIntyre's asked Carter to save money and cut the plan altogether. •

The Insider

Jarvicissitudes

Triumphant Prop. 13 Brings Ugly Intimations for Endless Summer



WIDE WORLD

Howard Jarvis, 1978's craggiest poster boy, has upset California with something called Proposition 13. It has put the state's once-potent unions and minority groups into a desperate, unprecedentedly ugly mood. Politically, California's off-balance and rumbling.

"We're entering a very ugly period," says Hank Springer, head of the 19,000 member United Teachers of Los Angeles. "The whites have said 'fuck you' to the niggers. They're putting college educated people on welfare. It's going to be a long, hot summer."

Public employees unions across the state are considering major disruptive strikes, according to several union leaders. Springer says that Los Angeles' public schools may well be closed down by striking personnel through November. Top Brown aide Tom Quinn says some union militants are threatening violence.

Meanwhile, black and chicano leaders believe 13 has taken from them virtually all the gains the last decade had brought them. Black Assemblywoman Maxine Waters estimates that there may be 34,500 layoffs in Los Angeles County. This would mean that some 84 percent of the chicano and 60 percent of the black civil servants would be out of work. Waters sees 13 as racially significant: "It's now ok to be openly against minorities," she says.

Thousands of young, mostly minority, juvenile delinquents across the state are also being loosed on their communities because of Jarvis-imposed cutbacks of youth camps. In L.A., over 1,200 delinquents will join more than 250,000 city youths who were to have attended now-canceled summer schools. One Bay Area juvenile counselor says, "I wouldn't walk in a lot of parts of Oakland this summer, and I know those people. If there are no jobs programs there will be a lot of people standing on street corners with their hands in their pockets looking for something to do."

The Jarvis landslide undermined the strength of minorities, labor, and liberals to buck the tide. Giddy, the right-wing will leap on Jarvis' big back and seek new limits on sales, income and other tax sources. "We are on the rise now," Anthony Hilder, a gleeful Jarvis ally and L.A. conservative told us. "Howard has united us as never before. People better watch out for the right from now on." *—Joel Kotkin and Paul Grabowicz*

Politics

"They didn't know I was a politician. They thought I was a work of art"

Candidate of the Century Darling Loses Squeaker by 2,440,000

We endorsed conceptual artist Lowell Darling (He handed out PhD's on skid row so that "instead of bums and winos, the streets of Sacramento are now full of doctors and philosophers") in the Democratic primary for governor of California. We were stung to find that he didn't win. As he watched incumbent Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. amass a 2,500,000 to 60,000 vote lead (with seven candidates in between), Darling said that he'd get even with the millions of defecting voters by "snipping the laces" he had used to sew up California's San Andreas earthquake fault. "California politics is too important to be left in the hands of Californians," Darling correctly pointed out. With the ringing call "Let them come to us" he now pledges to "run for governor of California in Portland, Oregon" under the slogan "Out of State, Out of Mind." Candidate Darling has displayed perceptiveness and a clarity of purpose that has endeared him to a vast portion of the electorate. If Lowell Darling decides to attempt the Big Race in 1980, he'll have a welcome ear with us.

Darling: Hero

We love you, Darling.

You're our boy. •

Late payment

California Settles With $50,000 For Billingslea's Prison Murder

Fred Billingslea, who died in prison in 1970, finally got an acknowledgment from the state of California that he'd been killed by San Quentin guards: a $50,000 settlement to his parents, resulting from their $1.3 million suit.

Billingslea, 24, had been serving time for robbery. Locked up in Soledad, he was moved (he had several mental breakdowns) to the Vacaville prison medical facility and then, finally, to the dungeon-like "B" section at San Quentin. The night he died Billingslea went berserk and set fire to his mattress. Prison guards hosed his cell, sprayed him with tear gas and then—using choke holds around his neck—dragged him down four flights of stairs to another cell.

Billingslea's parents got a classic telegram: Their son had "passed away . . . as a result of unknown causes." Prison officials claimed that smoke and flame inhalation had done him in; an autopsy found a fractured larynx caused by pressure on the throat. (Inmates avenged Billingslea by attacking a guard. During the resulting August 1970 trial, a shoot-out occurred at the Marin County courthouse and four people were killed. The killings of Billingslea and three prisoners at Soledad led to the trials of Angela Davis, Ruchell Magee and the San Quentin Six.)

Fred Billingslea: Choked, dragged, killed

The Billingslea settlement is the second of its kind against the state of California: In 1975 a federal court jury held the wardens and guards at Soledad Prison responsible for the 1970 death of three inmates, paying $270,000 to their families. Next month, 11 San Quentin inmates will go to court. They've charged that California attempted to obstruct them from being witnesses on behalf of Billingslea in 1970. They've said that they were the victims of harassment, tear gas attacks and beatings by prison guards.

—Ann Derry

Creative government

"Sirs: Dave Berkowitz is one of the finest young men it's ever been my pleasure to meet . . ."

As bees to comb, students glut D.C. yearly to wheedle recommendations from congressmen for college and graduate school. Happy kids collect fistfuls of lovely praises from legislators who don't know them. At a social gathering, one Cornell University student asked the late Senator Hubert Humphrey for a recommendation. "You fill it out and I'll sign it," the Happy Warrior beamed. The same student asked Senator Walter ("Fritz") Mondale the same question; he was given the same generous answer. Working off these legends, Kyra Goidich—researching a magazine article—recently asked several congressmen she'd never met to write recommendations for her.

UPI

O'Brien: A fine congressman

A staffer in the office of Robert Young (D-Mo.) spotted the ruse; that was one down—but two other congressmen were *ecstatic* at the opportunity. George O'Brien (R-Ill.) and Ed Jones (D-Tenn.) graciously picked up the chance to appraise their old friend Kyra Goidich. "She has excelled in her studies," O'Brien boomed on the page, "and has indicated interest in her government, her fellow man, and in the future of her country by the many activities she has been involved in over the past few years. I have no reservations about her successfully completing her course at your distinguished university." Goidich was a happy and well-thought-of woman: "I couldn't believe how easy it was," the ingrate said.

—Ira Rosen

Flexible flyer

Human Pretzel Jerry Brown Bends Self Into Pro-Jarvis Posture

WIDE WORLD

Gray Davis and Jerry: Like managing Barrymore

Facing a tough race against state Attorney General Evelle Younger, Jerry Brown will do every dance he can to turn Proposition 13 to his advantage and display himself as the man who can run an entire state government on $1.69. Brown's top political advisor, Tom Quinn, wants the emphasis off the Flaky-Jerry stuff and on to the "nuts and bolts of running the government and all that good stuff." (Apparently they've convinced Howard Jarvis himself, who said he "liked" Jerry and called Younger—who'd been pro-13—a "hopeless waffler.") Gray Davis, Brown's campaign manager and chief image-molder, insists that the Jarvis crisis is really a blessing in disguise—showing those who doubt it that his boy is indeed a man of destiny: "Look," Davis creates, "that thing's got us on Cronkite every night." And? "It's the most impressive challenge to his leadership. Leaders are best remembered for how they cope with crisis, and in this drama, Jerry's the only one with a speaking part."

—Joel Kotkin

Mr. Wonderful

Rizzo Sics Philly on Willa Duncan

Frank Rizzo, the consumer champion of Philadelphia, decided to remedy the city pothole problem. So Frank Rizzo, the creative public servant, had a lot of signs made instructing battered motorists to call the state for repairs. He had his picture taken with his new signs. But Frank Rizzo (and this is the Frank Rizzo *we* know) got the number on the signs wrong. A lovely woman in North Philadelphia, Ms Willa Duncan, overnight became America's fastest victim: Phone calls began rolling into her house demanding that she fix potholes. This never having been her calling before, she resisted the temptation to rent a hot asphalt mixer and hit the streets. Somehow, she got the word to the Mayor and Frank Rizzo, the gentleman, called her to apologize, followed by Frank Rizzo, the generous gentleman, who promised to send her a little present for all her trouble—a scarf with the city emblem on it. And then Frank Rizzo, the ever-expansive, had all the signs changed. At any rate, if you're having trouble with potholes don't call Ms Willa Duncan at (215) BA 5-1414. She's not that sort of woman.

—Tony Green

Politics

Pidgeons in a cage

Miners Denied Safety Protections Due to Foul Miscalculations

Despite a two-year struggle to pass a new, more stringent mine safety bill, it now appears that a host of non-coal mines will not receive the number of safety inspections mandated by the new law. It seems that the Department of Labor agency designated to inspect the mines just didn't ask Congress for enough money to carry out its duties.

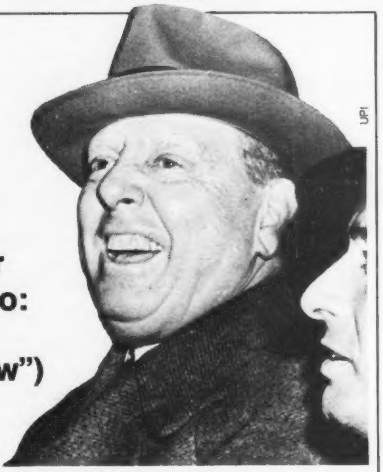
Over in HEW, it's a different problem. There, Secretary Califano's sharp pencil boys, reportedly under pressure from the Office of Management and Budget, refused to increase the program budget of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, even though the agency is required by the new law to study a wide range of on-the-job-hazards. The reason: "Everybody in HEW is scared shitless of regulation," according to one NIOSH official.

And at the White House, the Carter Administration is fast losing credibility with those working in the pits. The President's first prospective appointees to the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission include: ex-congressman Jerome Waldie, who the White House admits knows little about mining, a lawyer who has worked for Amerada Petroleum, Anaconda Copper, Exxon and Penzoil, and a judge from the Civil Aeronautics Board. And the President's Commission on the Coal Industry, set up after this winter's bitter coal strike, has as its first three members a Texan banker, who sits on the board of Continental Oil, West Virginia Governor Jay Rockefeller, who publicly supported the coal contract roundly rejected by rank and file miners, and former Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz. Though Wirtz is better than the rest, he probably will have just a token amount of time to devote to the group.

—Bill Bishop

I knew him well

Democratic Exec Director Horgan's Hero: Frank ("I Am the Law") Hague


UPI

Dan Horgan reveres the memory of Frank Hague. Frank Hague was the New Jersey boss who said, "I am the law." Dan Horgan's now the executive director of the Democratic National Committee—and examining the possibilities.

"I am organizing the grass roots—precinct by precinct, municipal chairman by vice-chairman, state party chairman and up. I have raised money for the party with $5 spaghetti dinners, just like Frank Hague—God bless him—used to do." Hague was Horgan's first and most influential teacher in politics. "He was different, he was a reformer," Horgan says. New Jersey has at least 100 former politicians behind bars, but Dan Horgan likes to remember the nice things: "If people were cold, Hague sent someone over to get the fuel; if they didn't have groceries, he brought over groceries; if somebody was drunk in public, the police wouldn't arrest him—they found out where he lived and brought him home."

Dan Horgan won Ohio for President Carter. "We got the vote out. We identified those who said they'd vote Democratic and we got them limousine service to the polls. But the secret was the mailings, thousands of mailings. And the secret was the stamp. It *looks* first class but isn't. It's very impressive."

Horgan is Irish. He wears a green tie, dark green pants, light green jacket but grey cigarette ashes. "I have a feeling for the streets," he says. "Never took a poli-sci course. I just follow my instincts. I talk to cabbies, bus drivers . . . they know. Waitresses who've been getting smaller tips know economics. Hague knew all that. He knew all the buttons to push to get the job done. Properly." The executive director of the Democratic Party smiled and showed blackened teeth. *—Ira Rosen*

Triumph of the Swill

New Broadcasting Law to Sanctify Junk and Trash Fairness Doctrine

Hate *CBS Reports*? Want a diet of *The Love Boat* and nothing else? The House Communications subcommittee may be on your side.

If its recently introduced bill removing virtually all government controls over broadcasting becomes law, many public interest controls over the airwaves will be dead. The proposed legislation, ostensibly a revision of the obsolete Communications Act of 1934, would eliminate the old requirements that broadcasters operate in accord with "public interest, convenience and necessity"—swiping away the accepted notion that the airwaves ultimately belong to the public with broadcasters acting as trustees.

The bill, introduced by Congressman Lionel Van Deerlin, would eventually abolish government licensing of broadcasters, who now have to apply for renewal of their licenses every three years. Also scheduled for extinction would be the famous Fairness Doctrine, which requires TV and radio stations to treat controversial issues and present contrasting views.

Broadcasters are understandably delighted with the Van Deerlin bill, but with a loud exception: The measure provides for a "spectrum use" fee to be levied on commercial stations based on their market size. The fee would provide revenues (some $200,000,000 per year) to finance public broadcasting. The networks, each of which owns and operates five of the largest stations in the country, will soon mount expensive lobbying campaigns against the egregious tax.

—Michael Massing

WIDE WORLD

Public-interest TV: Good night and good luck

On newsstands everywhere

The U.S. Times

Expansionist *Times* Tests Toward Trans-Continental Pre-Eminence

Inside the *New York Times*, the editors are calling it the "country edition": It's a special slimmed-down, spruced-up version of the gray lady designed to entice new national readers. For six days, starting June 18, a test run of 1,200–1,400 copies landed in Chicago, Detroit and Cleveland homes. If the guinea pig readers like it enough, the *Times* will push on to develop a fully national paper. The end result? Possible facsimile production of the *New York Times* at printing plants around the country.

The test paper, a freebie for carefully selected mid-to-upper income homes not already receiving the *Times*, had two sections. The first carried national and international news; the second was devoted mostly to Business Day, the *Times'* recently expanded financial section. The paper, edited by *Times* national editor David Jones, carried few New York City or suburban stories. After the six-day tryout, the readers were quizzed by *New York Times* and Yankelovich market researchers.

In a year when The New York Times Company's first quarter net income was up a whopping 32 percent, there are some curious implications to a *Times* move to go national. Can such a paper generate sufficient national advertising? Can it garner enough circulation?

Times brass insist that the papers flown out of New York each night were nothing more than a "market research project." "Just a test in the same way that Proctor and Gamble tests its products," said *Times* spokesman Barry McCarthy. "The tiniest thing imaginable," said Sydney Gruson, executive vice president of the company. "It's a tiny six-day test. After that, it will be mothballed for quite a while."

The corporate soft-pedaling of plans two years in the making could well reflect uncertainty. Outside of the *Times* offices there is a good deal of skepticism. The *Wall Street Journal*, at which a national *Times* would take a direct hit, is unconcerned: "They're beefing up their financial coverage, but they've got a long way to go," says *Journal* spokesman Everett Groseclose. "It's a crowded market place, and it's difficult to see how they're going to bring it off."

The *Chicago Tribune* is not nervous about a possible encroachment in their backyard. "I think it's very difficult for a newspaper, even one with as many resources as the *New York Times*, to move from its home base and have much impact," says Les Bridges, the assistant marketing director of the *Tribune*.

And there is the memory of the *Times'* expansion 16 years ago. A West Coast edition printed in Los Angeles lasted all of two years. On that occasion the gray lady retreated with a fallen face.

—Jane Perlez

Sonny buoyed

*Times*man Fights to Have Readers Know Him as His Mother Does

If you like to know that boundaries of dignity still exist take heart in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times'* examples in dealing with Sonny Kleinfield.

Now Kleinfield, who's written for *New Times* (Oct. 29, 1976, Feb. 18, 1977, etc.), was born to a nice family as Nathan Richard Kleinfield and that's what his birth certificate reads. But his friends, his colleagues, many fine people and his mother know him as Sonny. This is not an unknown moniker in the world of celebrity. Witness such respected examples as metropolitan sports mogul Sonny Werblin, former TV Academy President Sonny Fox, Republic of China President Sonny Yat-sen. Despite those precedents, the *Journal*'s then-managing editor Fred Taylor didn't think the name Sonny belonged among his stock quotations. "They didn't think it was dignified enough," said Sonny ("N.R.") Kleinfield.

Media

WSJ! That's no way to run a business: Soon enough Sonny was offered a job with the *Times* in their new Business Day section and joyously learned that his new editor, John Lee, had no problems with Sonny. A happy Kleinfield was he until he sniffed his first whiff of trouble—Tony Parisi, hired for the business section a few days earlier, was told that in print he'd be Anthony J. Parisi. Sonny shook; N.R. rejoiced.

And sure enough: When Kleinfield got his first byline, by order of executive editor A.M. (Abraham Michael) Rosenthal, he was N.R. Rosenthal, however, had a rationale—the *Times* had not hired a man from the *Wall Street Journal* to go unrecognized; they'd hired a by-line that savvy readers would respect. Kleinfield sighs, but accepts it. "I feel better when I see Sonny," he said, "but I'll have to live with this." So there goes Kleinfield, trotting down the great gray lane with R.W. Apple, Jr., H.J. Maidenberg and A.H. Raskin. It's a source of a little sadness to him, that even though hot type's still used at the *Times*, the Sonny's never set in a skittish empire.

—Michael Hoyt

On the Button

Clitoris Transplant Apparent Smash

Surgery for female frigidity? Dr. James Burt shocked a recent New York sex therapy conference when he revealed that over the past 12 years he has operated on 4,000 women who were unable to have orgasm during intercourse. His technique is to reconstruct the vagina to make the clitoris more accessible to direct penile stimulation.

MOVIE STAR NEWS

Mrs. America: Total Joy

It works, he claims, and as proof he presented his beautiful 31-year-old wife, Joan. She told the incredulous audience the operation had been a "complete success," according to the magazine *Medical World News*.

Without exception, professional sex therapists seem horrified by Dr. Burt's treatment. They claim it makes no sense physiologically and that it is a sexist, woman-reducing procedure. Dr. Diane Fordney, a gynecologist at the Stony Brook campus of the State University of New York, says if women are made orgasmic by mouth, hand or vibrator, there's no need for them to think orgasm must also be accomplished via the penis.

Undaunted, Dr. Burt claims more than 100 of his patients have reported unanimous and enthusiastic approval, and he has hired a public relations firm to help spread the word. It will surely be one of the most unusual ad campaigns in history.

—Larry Frederick

The totally new Colt wagon. Isn't a Datsun. Isn't a Toyota. It's a lot of little Dodge.

The new 1978 Colt wagon gives you the kind of practicality and efficiency you've come to expect from an import (more about that a bit later). But it also features a brand-new long wheelbase. Low profile, wide stance. And generous glass area all around.

LOTS OF ROOM, LOTS OF LUXURY.
In addition to offering the luxury of real room, the new Colt wagon comes with an extensive list of standard niceties. Things like a trip odometer. Tinted glass all around. Electric clock. Rear window defogger. Color-keyed cargo mat. Luxury sport steering wheel. Tilt steering column. And a whole lot more.

NEW MCA-JET ENGINE.
A brilliant engineering achievement that manages to squeeze a lot of power out of 1.6 litres and still be rated by the EPA at 37 MPG on the highway, 27 MPG in the city.* And an optional 2.6 litre version with "Silent Shaft" design for incredibly smooth running.

OUTSTANDING ROADABILITY.
Other engineering features in this totally new Colt wagon include a new four-wheel coil suspension for quieter ride and improved handling. And plenty of road-grab from 14-inch wheels.

SOMETHING SPORTIER?
There's the available Estate Wagon Package (shown) that features exterior simulated wood-grained panels, luxury cloth interiors, carpeting, and floor skid strips for the cargo area.

See your Dodge Colt Dealer today. About buying or leasing a new Dodge Colt wagon.

"Brilliant execution of the wagon concept, Mr. T."
"I thought it was yours, Mr. D."
Colt
1978

Dodge

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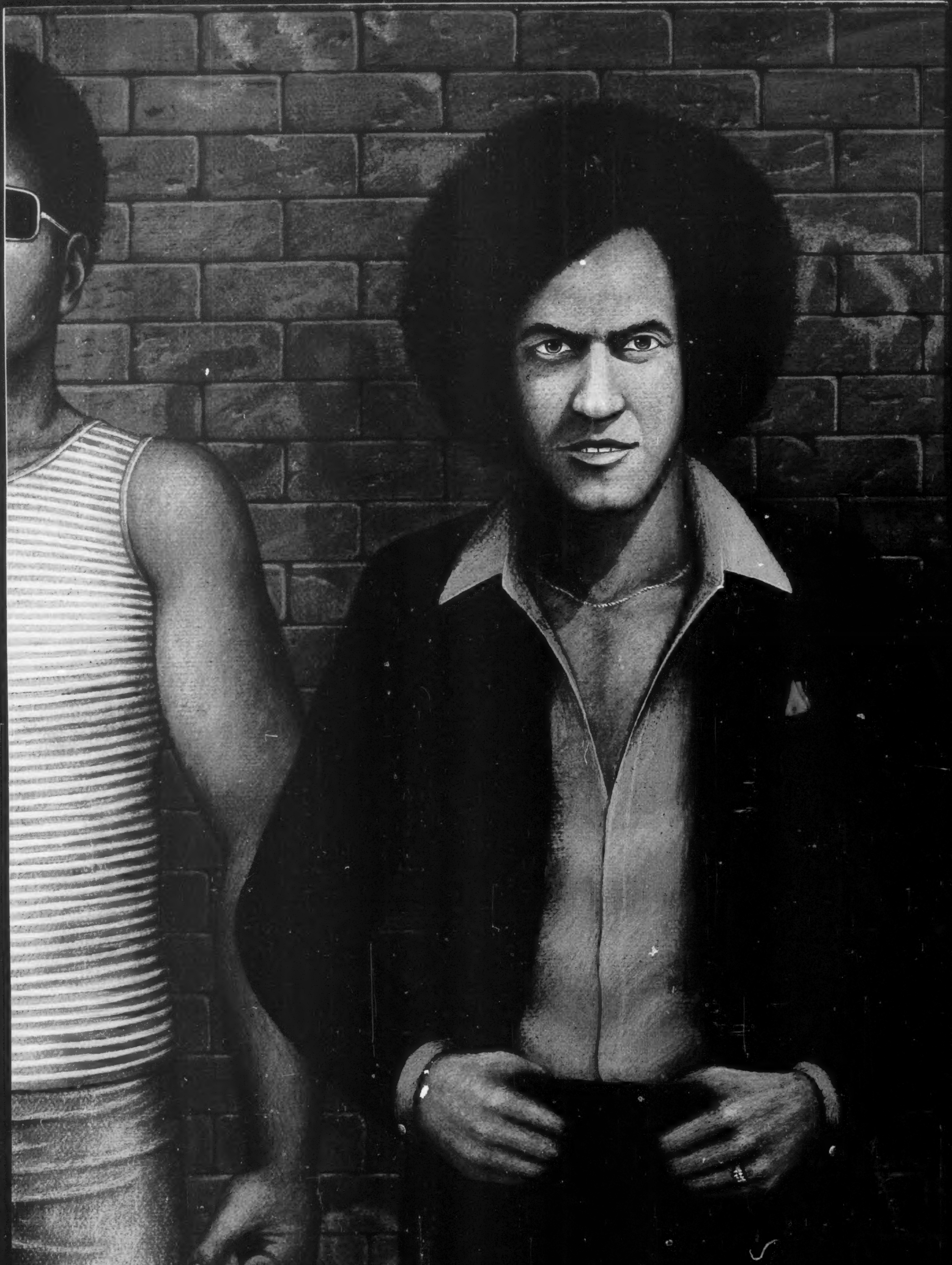
*EPA mileage estimates. Equipped with standard four-speed manual transmission and 3.9 rear axle ratio. Your mileage may vary, according to your car's condition, equipment, and your driving habits. California mileage lower.



m. buss

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NewTimes

How Huey Newton created a street gang at the center of the Black Panther Party

THE PARTY'S OVER

by Kate Coleman with Paul Avery

Several weeks ago, a 30-year-old black woman went to police in Oakland, California, to report she had been kidnapped and sexually assaulted. She said the incident had occurred two days earlier, in the afternoon. The woman gave this account:

While waiting for a bus in crowded downtown Oakland, she had stepped into a phone booth to make two quick calls. She spoke first with her fiancé, and was about to call her mother when a gold Cadillac pulled up nearby and a huge man got out. The woman later guessed he stood 6 feet 7 inches and weighed about 400 pounds.

"Mr. Newton would like to see you," the man said, gesturing toward the late-model Cadillac.

"I don't know any Newton," the woman replied.

A light-skinned black man with a large Afro got out of the Cadillac and beckoned to her. Then the big man, indicating a gun in his pocket, said, "You'd better come with me." He pressed up against her and she could feel the barrel. He warned that if she yelled for help, "I'll blow your brains out all over the phone booth."

Both men then shoved her into the back of the car, and the big man took the wheel, leaving the other man in back with

Illustration by Mark Hess

the woman. "You know where to go," he told the driver, and the car sped off toward the industrialized section of West Oakland, where it pulled in behind a building and stopped. The man in back snorted some white powder and began bragging to the woman about his sexual prowess, about what a "superior" man and lover he was. He started to unbutton her blouse, then tried to lift up her T-shirt underneath. She shoved him away. "No bitch pushes me around," he yelled, smacking her across the face. He went for her shirt again, pulled it up and began fondling and kissing her breasts. When she resisted, he burned her left wrist with a cigarette and called her a "street whore."

The driver turned around in his seat. "Huey, can't you see she isn't a street woman?" he said. He urged that they let her go, but the man in back told the driver that he should just follow orders. At that, the driver pulled out a pistol and directed the woman to do what she was told. She stopped all resistance then. And when the man in the back seat ordered her to fondle his penis through his pants, she obeyed, but he was dissatisfied with her efforts. He ordered her to excite him, yet despite her attempts, he failed to get an erection. Finally he pulled the woman's slacks down to her knees and ordered that she spread her legs while he performed cunnilingus on her. It lasted about five minutes.

Afterward, he went through the woman's purse and took out $46 in cash. He carefully examined her wallet and warned her, "Now I know who you are and where you live. If I hear anything about this, you'll be taken care of." Seeing pictures of her three children, he threatened them, too.

The big man headed the Cadillac for North Oakland, where the woman was released. Later, she estimated the ordeal had lasted about two and a half hours. The man in back handed her five dollars—"to catch a cab," he said—and threatened to kill her if she took action.

Badly shaken, the woman went to her mother's house. Her brother and her fiancé arrived soon after. She had been so affected by the experience that she fainted several times that evening, until finally her family brought her to the emergency room at Doctors' Hospital in Oakland, where she told the examining physician the whole story. The doctor urged her to call the police, but the woman was too frightened. It was two days before she reported the incident, and then only at the urging of her fiancé.

The woman told Oakland police her assailant was Huey Newton—founder and leader of the Black Panther Party. She said she had recognized him "from seeing him on TV and in the papers," but she identified him again from police photos. And from the sheaf of photos she unhesitatingly identified the big man as Robert Heard, Newton's 6-foot-8-inch bodyguard, who has been variously described as weighing between 380 and 470 pounds.

Police began the paperwork on her complaint, anticipating the arrest of Newton and Heard on charges of kidnapping and sexual assault. But the woman refused to press charges. She remembered the threats and was terrified.

After various parts of the woman's story surfaced locally, Newton and his lawyer, Sheldon Otis, insisted that Newton had nothing to do with the attack—"assuming it even took place," Otis said. They said he had been exonerated by a privately commissioned lie detector test. But a source close to the district attorney's office says the test was poorly conducted—that only four questions were asked, and that the two dealing with sexual assault were unspecific enough that Newton might have been able to pass a test he would otherwise have failed.

Nevertheless, Newton's defense team made copies of the lie detector test available to reporters as a way of refuting the woman's story. But a refutation was unnecessary. Even with prodding from the police and assurances of protection, the woman still refused to press charges, fearing Panther retribution.

The woman had good reason to be afraid. Over the last few years, Newton and other Panthers have moved like a street gang through the Oakland area. They have, say reliable sources, committed a series of violent crimes—including arson, extortion, beatings, even murder. Unlike the skirmishes that marked the Party's infancy in the late sixties, the recent incidents appear to have no political explanation. The Panthers are no longer under siege by the police, and this is not self-defense. It seems to be nothing but senseless criminality, directed in most cases against other blacks—sometimes Panthers themselves.

Most of these crimes remain open on police ledgers. The victims are too frightened, or the evidence too circumstantial, to bring Newton or his Panther subordinates to trial. Only a few of the incidents, in fact, have been covered in the Oakland and San Francisco press; some have never been reported to the police.

Most of these crimes remain open on police ledgers. The victims are too frightened, or the evidence too circumstantial, to bring Newton or his Panther subordinates to trial

Now, after six months of interviews with disaffected Party intimates, the police and others, it is possible to learn the scope of recent Panther violence. It is possible, too, to see how the wave of brutality has affected the Black Panther Party—and the effect has been great. Already, the Party's support in the community has diminished, its grant money has dried up, and valuable workers and supporters have left. The Panther day care center/grade school is still operating, as is the free health clinic, but these institutions exist side by side with another Newton creation of an entirely different sort.

New Times has learned that there exists a secret wing of the Party, assembled originally by Newton as his own palace guard, loyal to him against any contender. Within the Party, the group is known as "the Squad." By all appearances, the Squad is simply a team of Newton's bodyguards—but they often operate like underworld hit men.

An uncanny duality has grown up around the Panthers—a myth and a reality, difficult to penetrate and sort out. Over the years, many supporters have regarded Panther militance as a legitimate response to police brutality and the country's long history of racism. Now, confronted by Panther behavior that seems to defy explanation, some Bay Area blacks and leftists nevertheless continue to protect and defend the Party. There has been a fear that any exposé of the Panthers would play into the hands of reactionary forces and hurt the entire black community. Party support has dwindled, but to many people, still, the Panthers—and above all Huey Newton—are liberators of oppressed blacks, heroes standing up to malignant police forces, great teachers in the vein of Mao Tse-tung and Ché Guevara. Also, illegal government actions, aimed with particular zeal at the Panthers by the FBI and other agencies (as revealed

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Kate Coleman and Paul Avery are West Coast freelance writers. This article was prepared with assistance from the Center for Investigative Reporting.

Sidekicks: Huey Newton (left) and his 6′8″ bodyguard Robert Heard

two years ago by the Senate Intelligence Committee and subsequent Freedom of Information Act lawsuits), created a well of sympathy for the Party—and suspicion of efforts to expose it.

But, there is a growing sense among many sympathizers and ex-Panthers that it is Huey Newton himself who has discredited the Party—and, by seemingly gratuitous violence, betrayed the principles on which it was founded.

It was in the fall of 1966 that Huey Newton, the son of a Baptist minister, founded the Black Panther Party, along with his friends Bobby Seale and David Hilliard. The Oakland-based Panthers marked a departure from the trend of black cultural nationalism then on the rise in the ghetto, a nationalism that declared all whites the enemy. The Party argued that black liberation could not be won without the support of white revolutionaries and radicals, and it welcomed them in the fight against a common ruling-class enemy. The Panthers' "Ten Point Program" went further than any nationalist group's demands by calling for "all power to the people" and the armed self-defense of blacks.

In Oakland, particularly, blacks had little power. That predominantly black city was run until very recently by a white Republican administration and a police department described by a local black politician as "no different from the most rabid, cracker police force in a small Mississippi town."

To keep an eye on the police, Newton and his fellow Panthers began patrolling Oakland ghetto streets on weekend nights, defiantly toting shotguns, pistols and a copy of the California Penal Code. The Panthers, though, were careful to remain within the law. They advised Oakland residents of their legal rights and acted as an armed presence to prevent police brutality. The effect on the left was electrifying. The outcry on the right prompted state legislators to draft a bill that made it illegal to bear unconcealed arms. In May 1967, a delegation of Panthers went to the California State Capitol carrying their weapons. They were lobbying against the bill, but the furor unleashed by their disciplined military presence assured its passage.

The trip to the Capitol was well publicized, but the incident that would catapult Newton to national prominence came later, on October 28, 1967. Newton's car was stopped by Oakland police that night, leading to an exchange that ended with Newton shot in the stomach, one policeman wounded, and Newton charged with murdering the other officer, John Frey. Newton pleaded innocent. His story was that Frey had called him "nigger" and probed his genitals while searching him. He said that he had been shot point-blank in the stomach and had not shot back. But in 1968, a jury convicted Newton of voluntary manslaughter and he went to prison.

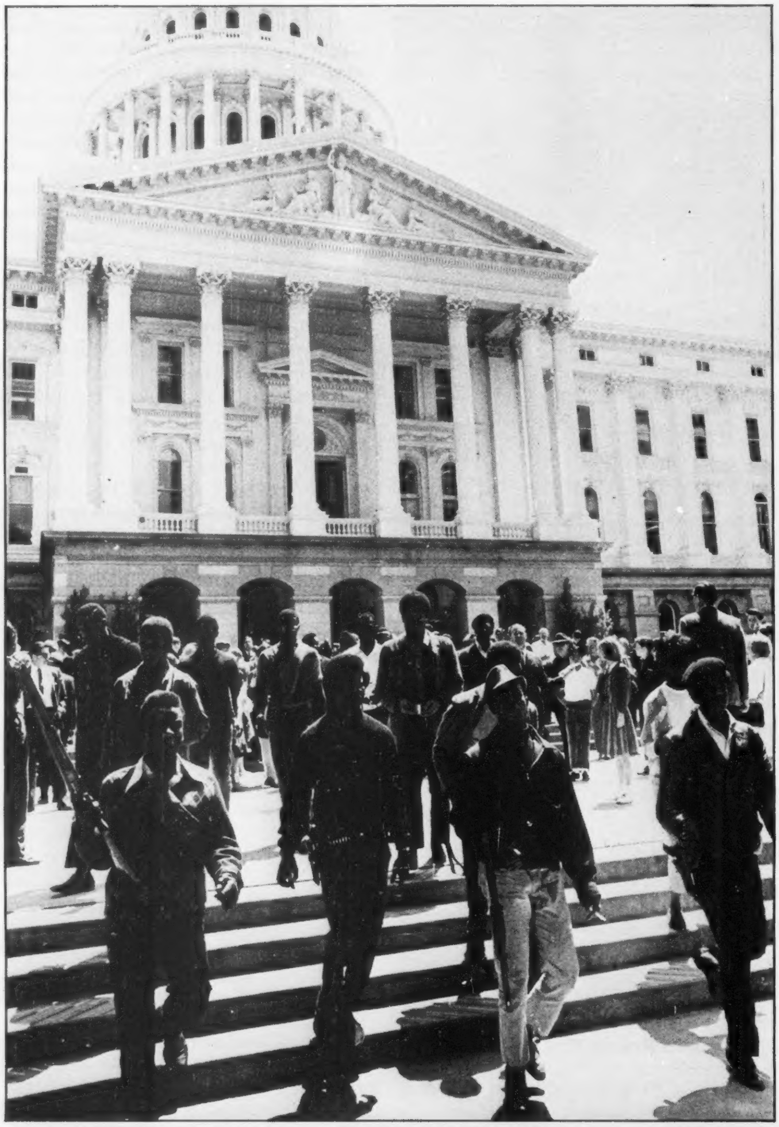
While in prison, Newton became a political martyr. "Free Huey" buttons cropped up everywhere—and the West Coast-based Peace and Freedom Party, dedicating itself to support the Panthers in a black-white coalition, adopted "Free Huey" as one of its slogans. (The Peace and Freedom Party also made Eldridge Cleaver its candidate for president of the U.S. in 1968. Cleaver, the celebrated *Soul On Ice* author, helped run the Panthers when Newton went to prison.)

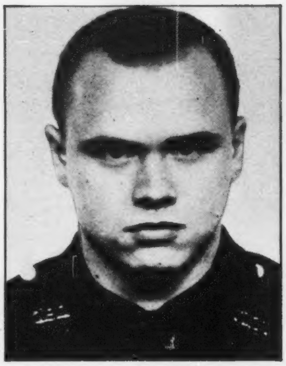
During this period, white leftists and liberals flocked excitedly to the Black Panther Party because they saw it as a nonracist revolutionary vanguard. The Party was self-consciously modeled after the Algerian FLN, with its urban guerrilla warfare tactic of deliberate skirmishes with police. Leftists saw Newton as the only black leader dedicated to Marxism but also capable of transforming ghetto blacks into a disciplined revolutionary army. (Newton affected a swagger stick to go along with the Party's militarism, and went by a variety of lofty titles over the years, including Minister of Defense, the Supreme Commander, the Supreme Servant, the Servant and, most recently, President.)

In predominantly black Oakland, only 2 percent of the police force was then made up of minorities. Panther claims that the police were an occupying army, and that law enforcement agencies were out to crush the Party, were concepts embraced immediately by white leftists. When, in 1968 and 1969, these law enforcement agencies raided Panther offices across the country, resulting in hundreds of arrests and a long list of dead and wounded blacks (see "The Unquiet Grave of Fred Hampton," *New Times*, May 31, 1974), Panthers and many white leftists alike viewed armed struggle as imminent.

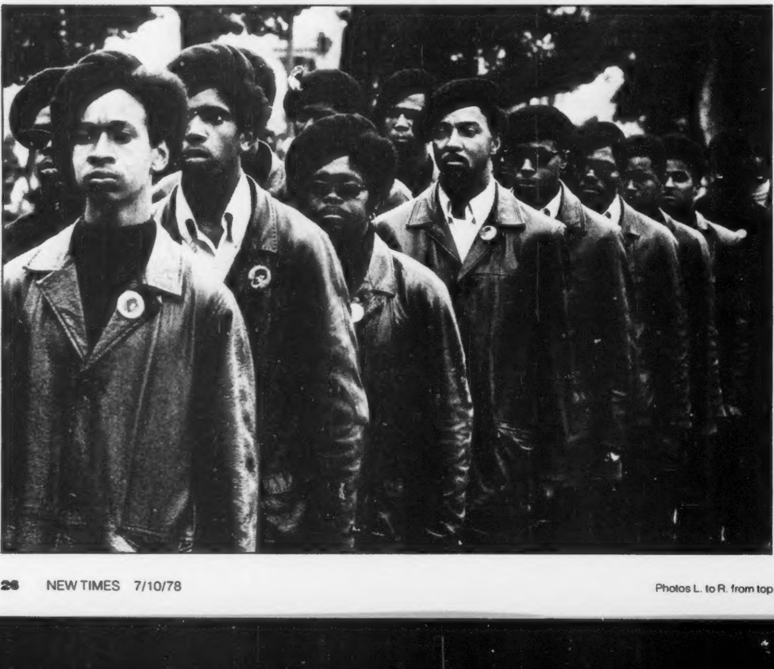
The money began to flow into Panther coffers as never before, and prominent white liberals and leftists, including such people as then-Yale University

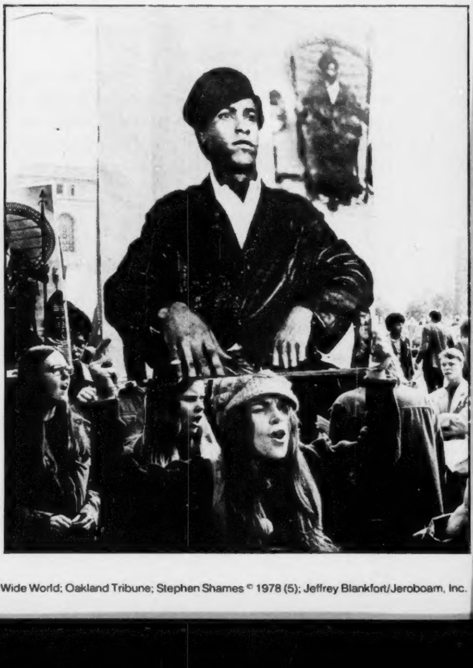
Photograph courtesy of the Oakland Tribune





The Early Days: In May 1967, Panthers grabbed headlines with a gun-toting demonstration at the California State Capitol (left). They were lobbying against a bill making it illegal to bear unconcealed weapons; Later that year, Huey Newton gained national prominence when he was charged with killing Oakland policeman John Frey (above); During the first of Newton's three trials on the charge, supporters gathered across from the courthouse, bearing posters of Newton as a show of solidarity (top right photo); In the months that followed, there were more "Free Huey" demonstrations, such as the Oakland rally addressed by Panther co-founder Bobby Seale (right); When Newton went to prison in 1968, Eldridge Cleaver (far right photo, with wife, Kathleen) became the major force in the Party; Panthers were not the only ones outraged by Newton's sentencing: the night the verdict came down, two drunken Oakland cops, apparently angry that Newton was convicted of manslaughter and not murder, shot up the window of the Panthers' headquarters (bottom right photo); From the beginning, the Party differed from black nationalist groups in two major respects: Panthers invited participation from whites (below, a 1970 "Free Huey" rally in San Francisco), and the Party adopted a disciplined, military-like presence (bottom left photo)





Photos L. to R. from top: Wide World; Oakland Tribune; Stephen Shames © 1978 (5); Jeffrey Blankfort/Jeroboam, Inc.

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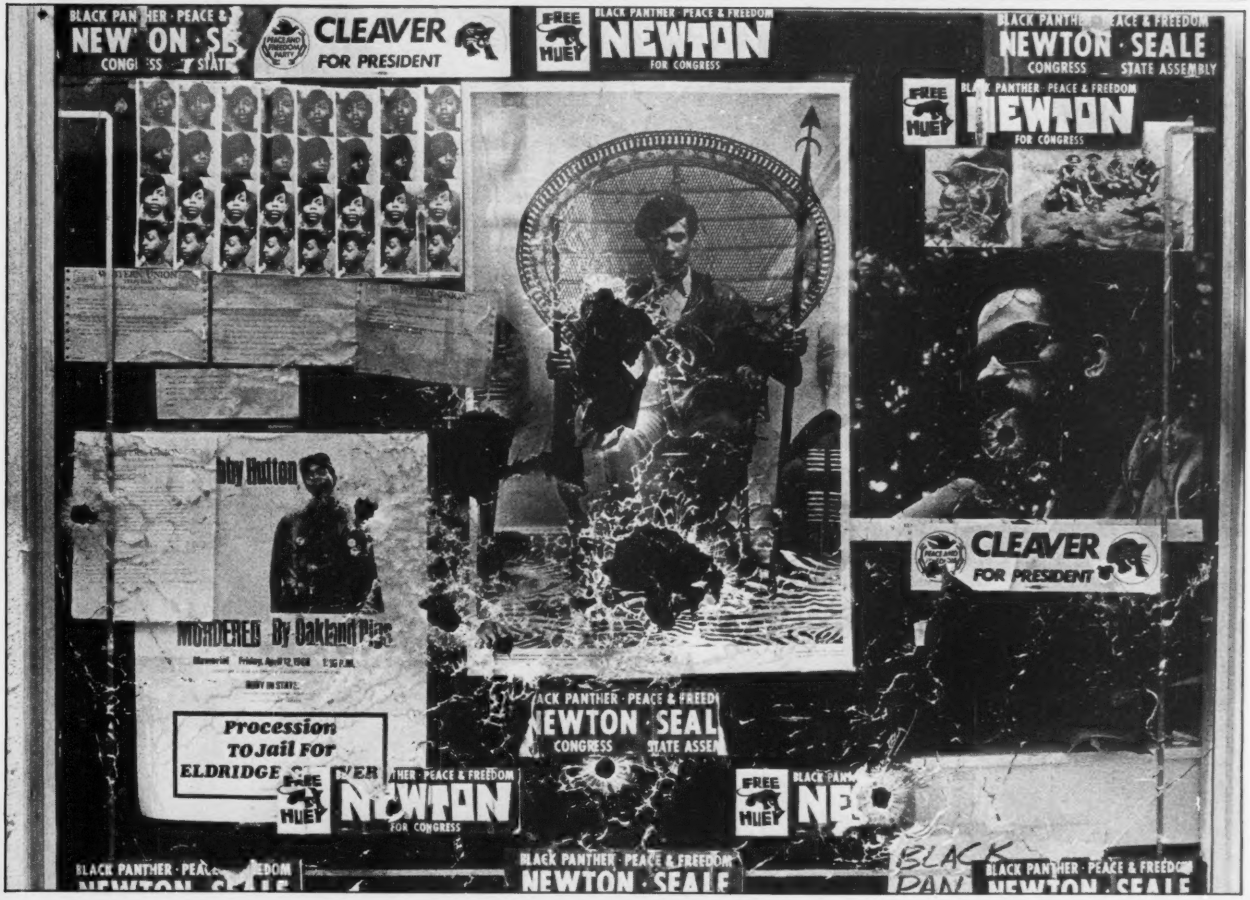
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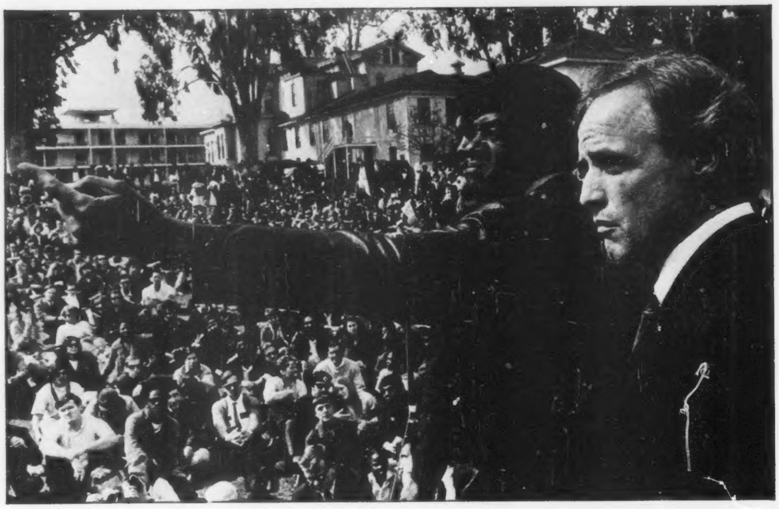

Radical Chic: Marlon Brando in Oakland with Bobby Seale in 1968

president Kingman Brewster and author Jessica Mitford, raised money or spoke publicly in support of the Party. It was the era of Radical Chic, of Leonard Bernstein's swank New York cocktail party for the Panthers. And everywhere, liberals and leftists were demanding that Huey be freed.

In the summer of 1970 he was freed—his conviction reversed because the judge had erred in his instructions to the jury. Newton faced two more trials on the charge, both ending in jury deadlocks. Finally the district attorney declared that any further attempt to prosecute Newton would be futile, and the case was dismissed.

When he came out of prison in 1970, Newton brought with him plans for major changes in the Black Panther Party. He reversed the stand on armed insurrection, saying there was little support for it in the black community, and that the cost to the Party in lives and resources had been staggering. Instead, Newton called for "survival programs pending the revolution," and began putting Party resources into projects such as the Black Panther school, the free health clinic, food giveaways and sickle cell anemia testing.

In style as well as content, Newton backed away from the militant posturing of Eldridge Cleaver. Cleaver used to visit local black churches (accompanied by his leather-jacketed Panther bodyguards) and stand in the pulpit addressing the congregation as "motherfuckers," demanding support for the Party. As with the Panthers' "off the pig" rhetoric, the obscenity was part of a "revolutionary" style. But when Newton was released, he ordered Panthers to clean up their language and attend church regularly, a move to win over mainstream blacks. (Cleaver, meanwhile, had fled the country well before Newton's release to avoid trial on charges stemming from a 1968 shoot-out with Oakland police. From Algeria he ran the international wing of the Panthers.)

But as the Panthers assumed a nonviolent stance, there flared within the Party an intense power struggle between two factions—and it threatened to destroy the Panthers. Ideologically, the split came over Newton's orders to back away from "military" skirmishes with the police.

The underground, military wing of the Party was committed to immediate armed struggle, viewing Panther "survival programs" as symbolic alternatives to existing institutions, useful primarily as propaganda to build support for the Party. But Newton pushed through his changes despite the underground's objections. And to solidify his position, he expelled the Party's militants, who formed the only organized group within the Panthers tough enough to challenge him. One of the first to go was leading Los Angeles Panther Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt. In his wake went the entire New York chapter. Cleaver protested strenuously from Algeria, but Newton's break with Cleaver went beyond ideological matters. It was a public battle between two titanic egos, exacerbated by Newton's fears, after nearly three years in prison, that the Party had slipped beyond his control. He worried that even in Algeria, Cleaver posed a threat to his leadership. (The FBI, it was later learned, exploited this fear by forging defamatory letters from Newton and Cleaver as a way to play on their mutual paranoia.)

***New Times* has learned that there exists a secret wing of the Panthers known within the Party as "the Squad." Its members often operate like underworld hit men**

To ensure his authority, Newton closed most of the 30 Panther chapters nationwide, calling loyal members to Oakland. But warring between the factions continued, and people on both sides were murdered. Newton loyalist Sam Napier, for example, the national distributor of the Panther newspaper, was cut down by bullets in New York. The atmosphere became so volatile that when Geronimo Pratt's pregnant wife was stabbed repeatedly and killed in 1971, many attributed the murder to the ongoing internecine warfare.

Ultimately, Newton prevailed, beefing up his one-man rule of the Party. But he remained plagued by insecurities for years, sometimes doubting his oldest and closest lieutenants. In early 1974, in a move that puzzled and upset supporters, he expelled co-founder David Hilliard from the Party. So great was Newton's displeasure that he went into the Panther school and personally pulled out all four of Hilliard's children.

Hilliard, Newton's friend since childhood, was in prison at the time for his role in the 1968 shoot-out with Oakland police, the same incident that forced Eldridge Cleaver to flee the country. According to Panther insiders, Newton told Party members that Hilliard had orchestrated a coup against him, and Newton charged Hilliard's wife, Pat, a tireless Party worker, with misusing Panther funds.

David Hilliard's expulsion sent out severe shock waves. He was widely loved, and regarded as the heart of the Party. Hilliard was the organization man who ran the Panthers when both Newton and Bobby Seale were in prison and Cleaver was out of the country. He had worked unflaggingly for Newton's release. To those who knew Hilliard, the "coup" story put out by Newton seemed preposterous. And to this day, even to close friends outside the Party, Hilliard professes bewilderment about the real reasons for his expulsion.

It was against this backdrop of insecurity, and to guarantee his dominance over the Party, that Newton created "the Squad." (But the Squad was also an outgrowth of a much earlier fascina-

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Community Service: When he left prison in 1970, Newton renounced Panther militance and emphasized instead "survival programs pending the revolution"—such as sickle cell anemia testing (left) and food giveaways

tion Newton had with small-time gangsterism—pimping, running card games and burglarizing houses in the Berkeley hills, activities he has acknowledged in his autobiography, *Revolutionary Suicide.*) Newton selected Squad members himself. A source familiar with the initiation rites describes the process:

"There would be some guy who had come into the Party off the streets. He'd work his ass off doing the hard, day-to-day stuff that keeps the Party going—you know, standing on the corner with the sickle cell anemia cans or hawking the paper. After a while he'd get the summons to go up to [Newton's] penthouse—that alone would be very flattering, because those people lived in dire poverty. But then he'd be up there with Huey and they'd snort cocaine together, and then he'd be told he had been selected for the Squad. For somebody low down in the Party, the whole thing would wow them—the coke, the good liquor and just being able to hang out with Huey." Party members have also related stories about the Squad sharing women with Newton. The carousing together, with the accouterment of good cocaine, was a major reward of Squad service.

The Squad itself has always been small, reportedly made up of two "fire teams," usually with five or six men each. The duties of Squad members varied, but frequently they accompanied Newton when he ventured out into Oakland's tough night life, into the bars and after-hours joints. It was during such forays, say the police and other sources, that Newton and the Squad began the practice of extorting money from bars, pimps and dope dealers.

The practice appears to have had its roots in a legal fund-raising effort begun by Newton in the summer of 1971. The Panthers began a boycott of black-owned liquor stores when recalcitrant owners refused to accede to Newton's demands that they pay "reparations" to the black community by contributing money to Panther programs. Negotiations ended the boycott in early 1972, and although no money ever changed hands, in Newton's mind the principle was firmly established: The Panthers were entitled to a piece of the action from businesses selling liquor to the black community.

Now, with the Squad, these payments from bars and clubs began to look suspiciously like protection money. The amounts paid by different owners varied, but some clubs were said to be shelling out as much as $500 a week. Yet none of the owners was willing to come forth and testify against Newton or Squad members. It has been a nettling problem over the years for law enforcement officials. They know what is going on, the black community knows what is going on, but no one can do anything about it because victims won't go to the police.

One club owner did have his nephew contact the office of Representative Ron Dellums (D-Ca.). "The man's uncle had just opened a bar," says Dellums aide Don Hopkins, "and he said that it appeared the bar was not going to be successful because of the extortion demands of the Black Panther Party. I raised the possibility of going to police, but he discounted that as a choice."

Newton enjoyed the tough night life in Oakland and Berkeley. He bragged once of being a "two-fisted drinker"—and he was a two-fisted fighter as well. A lawyer who has worked for the Party says fighting "is one of Newton's forms of recreation—like the fastest gun in the West." His rap sheet bears this out, beginning with his arrest at 16 for beating a schoolmate with a hammer. Newton has subsequently said he used poor judgment ("I was immature then"), but there were other scrapes in the years that followed. (At 22, for example, he stabbed an unarmed youth in the head with a steak knife.) Newton could be particularly violent when crossed, or when he felt himself to be.

This streak of vengefulness would become characteristic of the Squad, too, as those who didn't comply with the extortion demands would learn. There were the fires at the Fox-Oakland Theater in 1973. The first fire occurred on August 10, the second on December 5. Both were arson, in the opinion of investigators. The estimated property damage came to $89,000.

The fires were set within two days of scheduled rock concerts, promoted by Oakland businessman Ed Bercovich. He had leased the theater from its absentee owners and finally secured an Oakland City Council special permit to put on live entertainment. The city council gave its approval in part because Bercovich had worked out a deal with a local youth group to hire unemployed teenagers in Oakland—a large majority of them black—to clean up the theater, sell tickets and usher.

Newton resented it. The Black Panther Party had once had a subletting arrangement at the Fox-Oakland to show movies. Newton had dreams of taking over the theater and turning it into a cultural center, with the kind of live entertainment that Bercovich had suc-

Photographs by Stephen Shames © 1978

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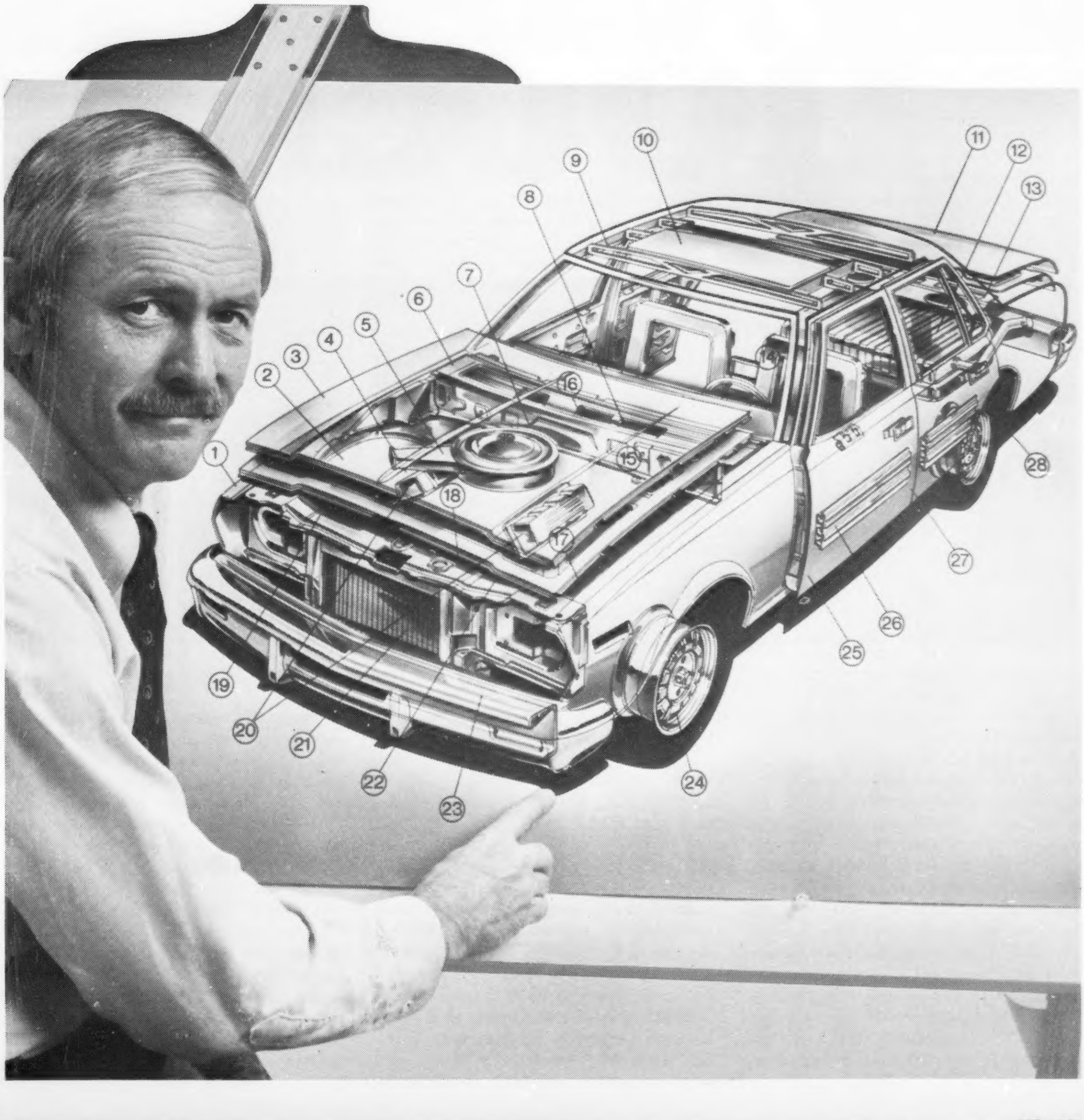

DET 11/1

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DET 11/2

Feeding Body and Soul: The Party has won favorable publicity with its free breakfast program for schoolchildren (left) and with the Panther grade school

ceeded in lining up. But the theater's owners weren't interested in Newton's plans.

Shortly after one of the Fox fires, Newton intimated to a penthouse visitor that the blaze had been set by the Panthers as retaliation. But he left out another part of the story: Bercovich had refused to pay extortion money to the Party.

Months before the first show was even scheduled, Bercovich says, he was approached by a Panther go-between, the owner of a bar frequented by Newton and his friends. The go-between urged Bercovich to come to some kind of agreement with the Panthers. He offered to set up the meeting, telling Bercovich the Panthers wanted "a piece of the action." And he warned that if a deal wasn't made, not one show would go on—"they would burn the place down," as Bercovich remembers it.

"Everything he said would come true, came true," Bercovich says, shaking his head sadly. "And I had all those kids working for me."

Even as he and the squad acted like thugs, Newton continually tried to conceal his "bad-ass nigger" side from his educated friends, just as he submerged his intellectuality beneath a macho exterior when he sortied out with Squad members to the bars of Oakland. One former intimate characterizes Newton as "schizoid," chiding himself for having taken so long to realize it. "He had different faces for different people," he says. "I never saw him crazy, never saw him brutalize people. I only saw him in his intellectual mode. He'd talk about Zen Buddhism or dialectics. It was always intellectual questions. It's interesting, because I have a non-intellectual friend, and when Huey ran into *him* at a party, the only thing Huey'd talk about was dope, street stuff and fights—like bragging about the last fight he was in. Huey would never talk politics to this guy—ever! With *me*, he never talked about anything else."

Newton managed his image most of all with wealthy or intellectual supporters; and while such people sometimes caught glimpses of the high-handedness with which the Party was run, they told themselves that Newton stood outside such practices. But most of these sympathizers were not around when Newton beat Party members, sometimes ordering Squad members to hold their guns on them when he did. (An eyewitness says that when Newton beat Seale bodyguard Carl Colar, he even ordered Len Colar, Carl's brother, to train his gun on the victim. Newton then pummeled Carl—with fists and a lead pipe.) And most sympathizers did not see the harsh disciplinary actions of the Squad, which over the years included, according to a number of sources, beatings, bull whipping and "mud-holing." (The mud hole, a deep pit dug on the site of the Party's first school in Oakland, was filled with cold water before the Panther being punished was thrown in. When he or she tried to climb out, the others would beat the Panther back down.)

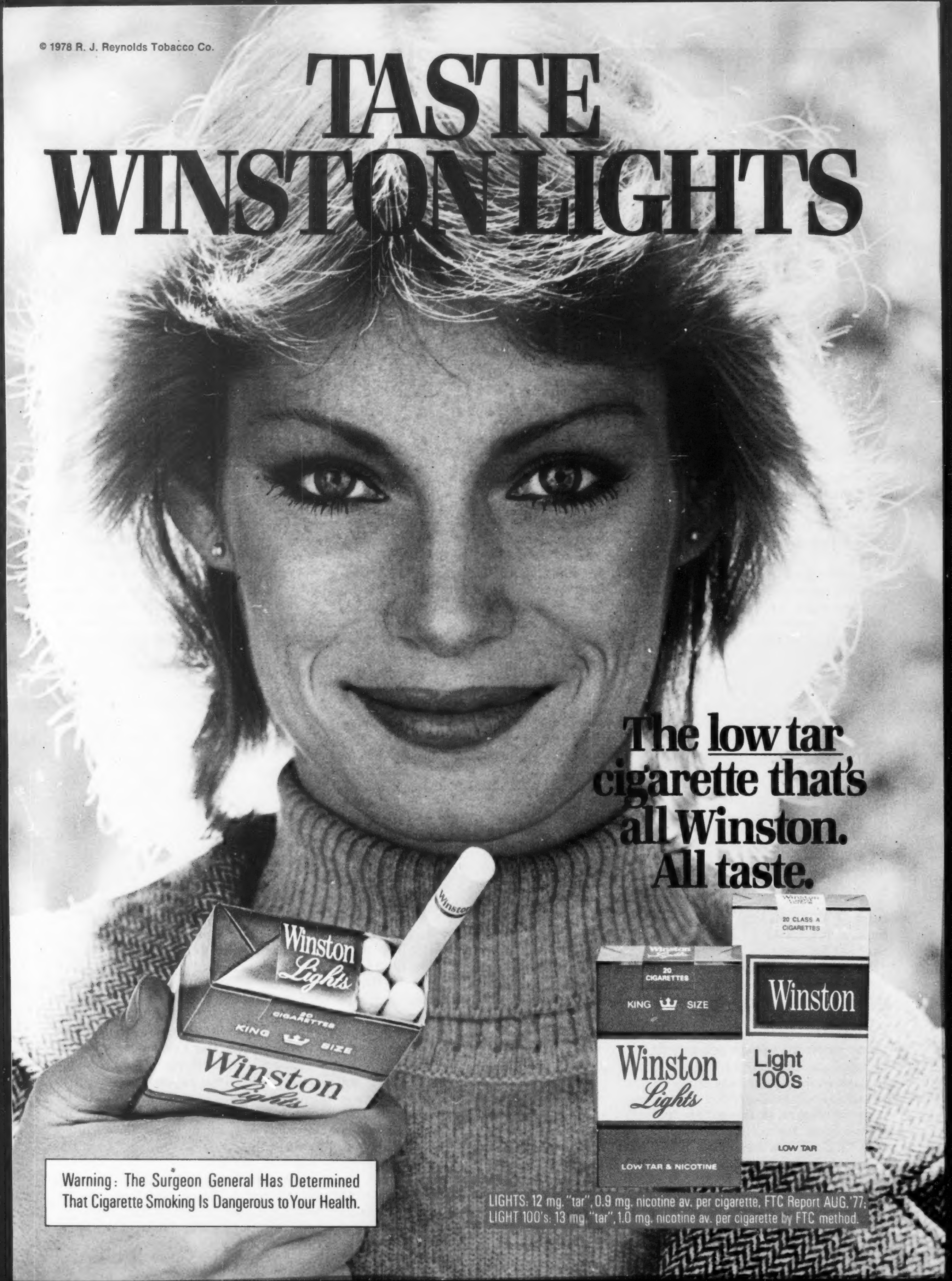
One former Party member traces the severe discipline to the Panthers' sense of themselves as an army at war. In that context, infractions real or imagined had to be dealt with swiftly. But long after the Party abandoned urban guerrilla warfare, the corporal punishment remained.

Few sympathizers saw the cramped dormitories where the Party rank and file lived; they saw only the inside of Newton's apartment, or took tours of the school. There always seemed to be cadres willing to do the work of the Party, but supporters may not have known that many Panthers left over the years, slipping away from Oakland in secrecy, lest they be caught and beaten.

Panther sympathizers may have seen little of this, but to others Newton's erratic side was more visible, and experiencing it tested their activism sorely. Such was the case when Newton singlehandedly destroyed a potential chapter of the Party in Texas in early 1974, according to a Bay Area activist who traveled there a year after the incident.

The group in Texas, People's Party II, was a grass-roots organization that operated several enterprises—including a store and a nightclub—to raise money for service projects in the black community. The group was considering becoming a chapter of the Black Panther Party, and Newton, in turn, wanted to bring the Texas business operation under the Panther aegis. So far along was the proposed merger that Newton and a small entourage flew to Texas to inspect the local setup. One of the former leaders of People's Party II told the visiting Bay Area activist that from the start of Newton's visit, the Texas people found his behavior disturbing. It seemed to his hosts that Newton was on drugs.

On Newton's last night in Texas, he met with the group in its nightclub. Decked out in a cape, he strutted around the room screaming, "I am the Supreme Servant!" He made a play for the woman leader of People's Party II, asking her to dance. She told him she was there with someone else. An argument ensued. In the course of the alter-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cation, Newton hit the woman, delivered a severe beating to her escort, and threatened to kill another person who tried to intervene.

The incident ended as quickly as it had begun. Newton left the bar and headed back to Oakland in the morning. But the woman told the Bay Area activist that the man Newton had beaten flipped out shortly afterward and was still institutionalized — a year later. The woman herself admitted to being so devastated that she had not done anything political since the incident. Moreover, she said, the local party was demoralized and weakened by the startling affair.

This behavior was in sharp contrast to Newton as genial host to scores of luminaries who answered his summons to share fine cognac and long, rambling conversation. Visitors would arrive at Newton's penthouse apartment in Oakland and find themselves ushered into a modern, expensively furnished living room of brown leather couches and stark walls. They would breathe in the heavy scent of gardenias floating in a brandy snifter. And Newton would flatter his guests with attentiveness. "When I was up there," says Alameda County Supervisor John George, a black lawyer boosted into office with Panther support, "*he* would serve me. He'd bring me a drink or a sandwich—and he would fix it himself. He didn't ask Gwen [his secretary] to do it. He would sit sipping Remy Martin and we would talk. He always seemed so happy to have someone to talk with."

Because of Newton's charm, guests such as John George willfully ignored the dark rumors they heard about him. "I like him," George says, shaking his head in a troubled manner. "That is why I may continue to excuse and excuse." Among some of Newton's former intimates, too, there is a tendency to excuse his violence—or even to deny it. Take the case of Bobby Seale, who founded the Party with Newton and Hilliard.

In 1974, Seale, who was then the Party's chairman, reportedly was beaten and had to be treated by a doctor for his injuries. By several accounts, Newton ordered his bodyguards to train their guns on Seale to ensure he didn't fight back while Newton administered the beating. After the attack, Seale left the Party and disappeared from public view, emerging only within the last year to publish a book.

Reached by phone in Philadelphia, where he now lives, Seale denies he was beaten. "It's not true," he says. "The police put out a lot of crap initially. *I've* even heard that off and on, but I don't pay any attention to it. Whoever said that is lying." But it was said by many who were not police, who were in a position to know—including someone who treated his injuries.

"What injuries?" Seale screams into the phone. "I had no injuries whatsoever! I don't give a damn who said it. Tell them I said they're a flat black-ass, motherfucking liar, or a white-assed liar—whoever the hell they are."

Seale's departure came in July 1974, just as Newton, according to the Alameda County district attorney's office, police and various witnesses, was embarking on a bizarre rampage of intermittent violence that would stretch over 18 days. It began on July 30 with a run-in he had with two plainclothes cops in the Fox Lounge in Oakland. Newton accused them of following him simply to harass him. He turned belligerent, the police said, and pointing a finger gun-like at one of the officers, screamed for bodyguard Robert Heard to "shoot him, shoot the pig-ass motherfucker—shoot him!" When Heard slipped his hand into the briefcase he carried, the policemen drew their weapons. Inside the briefcase was a loaded .38 caliber revolver and $1,000 in cash. Heard was busted. Later that night, with other officers for reinforcement, Newton was also arrested, along with Panther heavies Larry Henson and Flores "Fly" Forbes.

It was just the kind of event to jack Newton up. It heightened his paranoia, "made him crazy," as one of his friends says. Six days later Kathleen Smith, a 17-year-old prostitute, and her friend Crystal Gray were standing on an Oakland street corner hustling Johns. There were other prostitutes in the vicinity as well. It was a slow evening, a Monday before midnight. Crystal and Kathleen—or Kathy, as she was called by the other women—smoked a joint together. They were both feeling "mellow," as Crystal later testified at a preliminary hearing, when a big, fancy metallic-colored car cruised by their corner. Crystal hailed the occupants with a "Hey, baby!" The car kept going and stopped at the light. Both women noted with some appreciation that the car was a Mark IV Continental. Ten or fifteen minutes later, Crystal noticed the same car again, parked at the corner on a side street. She saw one of the occupants—"the light-skinned one"—get out.

"Which one of you ladies called me," Crystal later quoted him as saying.

The two women exchanged glances—those "what's-his-trip" expressions—and stepped back, sensing trouble. The man stared hard at them. Suddenly, Crystal said, he lunged forward and struck Kathy. "Her eyes got big," Crystal later recalled, and Kathy stumbled backward. Crystal was angry and said to the man, "Say brother, why did you hit my girl friend? She didn't do nothing to you."

The man's chilling response, she said, was to draw a small silvery gun from his breast pocket. Crystal yelled to Kathy to run, and she herself made for the nearby Ebony Plaza Hotel. Hearing her cries, the other prostitutes, too, ran inside the hotel. All except for Kathy. Crystal went back outside to see what had happened to her friend. As she did, a shot rang out. Rushing to the sidewalk, Crystal saw the same man standing over Kathy's slumping body. The Mark IV slid out of its berth and swung over toward the tableau of a wounded Kathy, held in Crystal's arms. The light-skinned man jumped in the car and it sped off.

Kathy had been shot in the jaw and was unconscious. The trauma from the wound damaged her spinal column and put her in an immediate coma; it was a half-death that lingered for 96 days. When hospital authorities finally decided to move Kathy's inert body to a nursing home to continue life-sustaining treatment, the shock of the move was too great for the small spark of life still left in her. She died.

Three prostitutes identified Huey Newton as the man who pulled the gun on Kathy. One of them was Crystal Gray, and her testimony, authorities believed, would be the most convincing to a jury.

Eleven days after the shooting of Kathleen Smith, two young women stopped in at the Lamp Post, an Oakland bar nominally owned by Newton's cousin Jimmy Ward but run by the Panthers. They ordered hamburgers and then, according to the police statement of one of the women, Helen Robinson, Robert Heard came to the table and began to "get smart" with her friend, Diane Washington. Washington sassed back

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"He had different faces for different people," one former intimate says of Newton. "I never saw him crazy, never saw him brutalize people. I only saw him in his intellectual mode"

Internal Strife: Over the years, Newton has broken with many of his closest friends and allies from the Party's early days. His first serious rift came with Eldridge Cleaver (at left in top photo, visiting Newton in jail in 1968. Man at center is unidentified); There seemed to be strategic reasons, among others, for the split with Cleaver. But Newton's 1974 expulsion of long-time friend David Hilliard (left) mystified those close to the Party; Another Newton intimate, Panther co-founder Bobby Seale (at left in photo below, posing with Newton), "resigned" from the Party in 1974. Reportedly, Newton had beaten Seale while other Panthers trained their guns on him.

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and it turned mean. Heard whispered something to a "little guy," and the next thing they knew, the "little one" came over and grabbed the other woman, Helen Robinson, by the jacket. He yanked her off her chair, and then he and Heard began pushing her back and forth. They each socked her whenever she came within their grasp. The "little guy" was Huey Newton, the two women said.

According to Robinson's statement, the two men then knocked her to the floor. Eventually someone in the bar—Robinson is not sure who—grabbed her by the collar and threw her into the street. Several times she tried to return to get Washington out, but each time she was rebuffed.

It was seven or eight minutes before Washington managed to escape from the bar. Robinson noted that Washington's lip was "big and bleeding, her jaw was swollen and her eye was kind of black." Robinson said that Washington had actually made her way out of the bar at one point, but that Huey Newton came out after her and "dragged her right back in." The women called police that night, and six days later made a complete report and identified Newton and Heard from a series of 12 photos marked with numbers—no names.

The Lamp Post bar incident had occurred in the early morning, about four a.m. Later that day, in the afternoon, there was more bloodshed, this time in Newton's apartment. The victim was Preston Callins, a handsome, middle-aged, middle-class black tailor. His account of the incident, two days after it happened, was tape recorded by police.

Callins said that three weeks earlier he had been introduced to Newton at the Lamp Post by a mutual friend. The two had met before but didn't really know each other. Callins did know, however, that Newton ordered his clothes from a men's store in San Francisco, and that the store, in turn, farmed its orders out to Callins. Callins told this to Newton in the Lamp Post and suggested they eliminate the middle man—that Callins make Newton's clothes for him directly. Newton agreed, gave Callins his phone number and suggested he give him a call. After trying for several days, Callins finally reached Newton and was invited to come over and measure him for a suit.

The tailor arrived with his materials packed in a sample case. Newton greeted him and began showing him around the penthouse apartment. "He did everything but get down to business," Callins later told police. "He was drinkin' some cognac. I think he paid $19 a bottle for this cognac . . . and he was drinkin' the whole time . . . and drunk as a skunk. Very potent stuff. I asked him to pour me just a little taste. I wanted to see how it tastes, you know." In a

Photos from top: Jeffrey Blankfort/Jeroboam, Inc.; Stephen Shames © 1978 (2)

show of hospitality, Newton told Callins he would order a bottle of the same cognac for him to take home, and he did so by speaking into an intercom to a woman in another room.

Seated comfortably now in the presence of another man whom Callins said was Newton's brother-in-law or possibly his uncle, the two began to talk. "He says, 'I'll tell you what. Everybody's been rippin' me off, Preston, on getting clothes made,'" Callins recalled. "'Now, if you give me a full price on a suit, one price,' he said, 'I'll have all of my clothes made from you.' I said, 'I can make you a suit for $180 with my material.'"

But Callins said he never got around to showing Newton the materials in his sample case. "I had a suit that I had on that he kept telling me he didn't like . . . and I said, 'Well, I didn't bring this suit over here for you to like . . . I'll show you some samples.' But he wouldn't let me show him any . . . So he said somethin' like, he said, 'Oh, goddammit. I've been ripped off! Blah, blah, blah, blah.'

An eyewitness says that when Newton beat Seale bodyguard Carl Colar, he even ordered Len Colar, Carl's brother, to train his gun on the victim. Newton then hit Carl with fists and a lead pipe

"I said, 'Oh, baby, don't feel that way,' and when I said 'baby,' that's what started the whole thing, because I have a habit of callin' my friends . . . 'baby,' you know—my wife, my brothers, my other friends, I call 'baby,' and he didn't like that.

"He jumps up and he goes buggy. 'Nobody calls me no damn baby.'" Then, Callins said, Newton marched from the dining area where they had been sitting and returned with a .357 revolver. "I'm sitting talking to his brother-in-law across the table," Callins said, "and he [Newton] whacked me . . . I mean a hard blow right across the back of my head while I was sitting at the table. Blood shot everywhere. Then he turned around and whacked me on the other side . . . Then he said, 'I'm gonna shoot you!' And I said, 'Aw, man, you gonna invite me to your home to start some stuff for nothing. What's wrong with you?'

"So he says, 'Uh, man, you called me a baby and I don't like you no way. You're a little bit yellower than I am. I don't like you.' "I said, 'Aw, man, get off of this shit!' So then he hit me again, and he hit me and knocked me on the floor . . . he kicked me in the mouth, and by that time I was tired of being hit. I jumped up and hit him in the mouth . . . knocked him upside the wall . . . by that time I was bleedin'. I was bleedin' a lot . . . I had lost, I bet you, three or four . . . pints of blood. I couldn't be no match for that little youngster there."

Callins managed to make it to the apartment door, unlock it and stumble out into the hallway, but Newton followed. Now he had a different gun. The first was of no use to him any more: The grips, Callins told police, had broken on his head. Callins tried to hide in a small recess of the hallway.

"He says, 'I'm gonna kill you!' He came and he followed me . . . and he made me go back, and by that time I was just bleeding everywhere. By the time I got to his door I just fell on the floor. Blood all down the hall, and all in his apartment. I saw his brother-in-law. I told him, I says, 'You, you must be out of your mind . . . Can't you stop this maniac from doing what he's doin'?'"

The other man tried to calm Newton down. In the meantime, Callins said, Newton had called in two of his bodyguards.

Newton beat him again, according to Callins' statement, and then brought out a tape recorder and tried to pressure Callins into making statements that would exonerate him. "He asked . . . questions like, 'Did you come in my house and molest me?' I said, 'No.' . . . And each time he hit me. Each time he slapped me . . . Boom! . . . He said, 'Didn't you do me wrong in my house?' I says, 'No, I didn't do wrong, I came here in peace. I came to make your clothes . . . you offered me a drink, I took a little shot, and you got drunk, and then you started hittin' me upside the head with your pistol and I couldn't stand it. That's why I hit you back!'"

Callins said the two bodyguards then brought a car around from the garage. Callins was ordered out of the building. He asked for his sample case, and the "big fellow" (whom he later identified as Robert Heard) retrieved it for him. Oddly, Callins said Newton ordered Heard to get the gift bottle of cognac for Callins to take home. The two bodyguards then ushered Callins downstairs, placed newspaper on the floor of the car (so Callins wouldn't bleed on the carpet) and drove him home. They ordered him out and chucked his sample case onto the sidewalk beside him. As Callins fumbled with his garage door lock, he fainted. His wife called the police and an ambulance.

Callins was taken to Kaiser Hospital in Redwood City, where his four depressed skull fractures required neurosurgery. When police visited him in intensive care to take his statement, Callins told them, "Every time he hit me with that pistol you could hear the bones crash."

In a preliminary hearing last fall, three years later, Alameda County Deputy District Attorney Tom Orloff called Callins to the stand to give testimony against Newton on the pistol-whipping charges. The tailor shocked the courtroom when he said that while he remembered the beating, he could no longer recall the perpetrator. He said his memory loss was a result of the injuries he suffered. Despite the playing in court of his tape-recorded statement to police shortly after the beating, in which he clearly described Newton as the sole assailant, Callins could not be shaken from his testimony. What Callins failed to tell the court, *New Times* has learned, was that he had recently received $6,000 from the Newton side.

Callins refuses to comment on his testimony. When asked about the money, his lawyer, Howard Moore, denies Callins was paid off for his silence. "Anybody has the right to sue anybody in civil court," he fumes, implying that the $6,000 represented settlement of claims Callins had against Newton. Alameda County records, though, show that Callins never filed suit. Sheldon Otis, Newton's lawyer, says that Callins passed along "verbal demands for civil damages for injuries to his person." Beyond that, Otis refuses to comment on the matter. (He was not involved in arranging for the payment.) Howard Moore puts it this way: "Mr. Callins had a claim against Mr. Newton for personal injuries and that claim has been resolved."

By the end of August 1974, police had filed a variety of felony counts against Newton. There was the assault charge stemming from the Fox Lounge altercation with the plainclothes cops, which was later amended to include charges relating to the shooting of Kathleen Smith, the beating of Preston Callins and the incident with the two young women at the Lamp Post. When Kathleen Smith died nearly three months later, the charges were amended again—to include a murder count.

But Newton was long gone by then. Sources say he had fled to Mexico, and from there, by boat, to Cuba. The Cubans granted him sanctuary on the condition that he keep his nose clean, live modestly and work. Newton agreed.

When Newton failed to show up for a preliminary hearing in late August, Panther lawyer Charles Garry met with reporters to announce that Newton had jumped bail and fled because pimps in Oakland had put out a contract on his life. To prove it, Garry played a tape-recorded phone conversation he had had with then-police chief Charles Gain. Gain had called Garry to say that an underworld source had tipped off police to the contract. But Gain's phone call had actually taken place almost a year before Newton left the country.

As Newton fled to Cuba, it seemed to many in Oakland that the Party was breathing its last gasps. But that judgment was premature. There were to be three years of impressive and previously unimaginable Panther inroads into the Oakland political establishment. This would all occur under Elaine Brown, Newton's successor.

Because of Newton's charm, some supporters ignored the dark rumors they heard about him. "I like him," a black politician once said. "That is why I may continue to excuse and excuse"

The glamorous, 34-year-old Brown had come to Oakland four years earlier from Los Angeles, where she had interrupted a singing career to work for the Panthers. She was smart, articulate and completely loyal to Newton—qualities that helped her rise quickly through the ranks. With Newton's blessings as he left the country, Brown became chairperson of the Party. Even from Havana he remained Number One, conferring regularly with Brown by telephone—monitored by the CIA—and more private messages delivered by trusted couriers. But it was Elaine Brown who engineered the Party's sudden acquisition of respectability.

Brown buzzed about Oakland in a red Mercedes and always dressed with the panache of a young woman executive. She had a flair for public relations, using the Panther school, begun under Newton, to gain favorable publicity for the Party, and to impress state and county officials. And from Alameda County, the cities of Oakland and Berkeley, the state of California, as well as private donors, she landed a series of service and educational grants for the Party that came to over $300,000. (Part of the grant money funneled into the Party came from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration [LEAA], and was earmarked for a Panther program to help juvenile delinquents. Bay Area leftists noted with amusement that the LEAA, formed in the days of "law and order" to aid local criminal justice systems, was a favorite agency of the Nixon Administration.)

During Elaine Brown's tenure, Oakland's first black mayor, Lionel Wilson, and Alameda County's first black supervisor, John George, were both helped into office by the crucial campaign support of the Panthers. One year before his election, John George had been Brown's campaign chairman when she herself ran for a seat on the city council in 1975. (She waged an impressive campaign and finished second.) "She got *all* the Democratic groups' endorsements," George says. "They recognized that the Panthers were moving into the legitimate political arena and that it was better to work with them than against them." In previous Panther attempts at public office, most Democratic politicians had been skittish about forming alliances with a Party that had Newton at the helm. In Newton's absence, the way was open for cooperation and trade-offs.

Elaine Brown's rapport with politicians didn't stop at the Alameda County line. In 1976 she went to the Democratic National Convention as a Jerry Brown delegate, and the governor couldn't have failed to notice that when nearly all of his other California delegates had switched their votes to Jimmy Carter (in a show of unity once his nomination was assured), Elaine Brown remained steadfast in voting for him. Perhaps that is why the governor agreed to see her when she came to Sacramento to lobby for completion of the Grove Shafter Freeway in Oakland, a project stalled by his freeze on highway construction funds. Speaking on behalf of an ad hoc organization formed largely by Republican businessmen in Oakland, Elaine Brown argued that without the Grove Shafter Freeway, a huge downtown development planned for Oakland would not be built. Thousands of jobs were at stake, she said, and she had won a guarantee from the development's backers that a percentage of the jobs would go to hard-pressed minorities.

"She said she didn't give a damn about the freeways, all she wanted was the jobs," says J. Anthony Kline, legal affairs secretary to the governor, who attended the meeting. "She was very convincing. We did what she wanted done. We agreed to complete the freeway."

But despite the high regard in which she was held by officials in Oakland and Sacramento, there were others who quietly referred to Elaine Brown as the "Dragon Lady." Sources say she had a pronounced vengeful streak. A local television reporter, for example, says Brown (who was then press spokeswoman for the Party) called him after he had broken the story of Bobby Seale's disappearance and "resignation." The reporter says Brown told him, "We know who you are, and if you come to Oakland, you're in trouble." After that, he says, he stopped pursuing the Seale story and has not wanted to cover the Panthers since.

Elaine Brown's precise relationship to the Squad is not clear. It is known, though, that the group continued its criminal activities during her administration. And there are no reports that she moved against it. Some Squad members served as her bodyguards; but unlike Newton, Brown did not tour the streets and bars with the Squad on shake-down runs.

During Newton's three-year absence, there were a series of robberies, shootings and murders that police regard as the work of the Squad. Other sources close to the Panthers share that belief. Witnesses in most of these cases refused to make formal identifications; in others, identifications were impossible because the assailants wore ski masks.

All of the cases are unsolved, save one murder for which a Panther, George Robinson, was convicted. (The conviction was later reversed because of an illegal police search.) But Oakland and Berkeley police, who are careful not to simply list any unsolved crime as Panther-related, see Squad involvement in the following cases:

● Tommy Jackson was a doorman at The Brass Rail, a Berkeley after-hours bar operating as a "private social club" and regarded in the surrounding community as a headquarters at the time for cocaine dealers. At 6 a.m. on August 27, 1974, the 19-year-old Jackson was admitting a customer when a car pulled to the curb and several black men inside opened fire with shotguns. Jackson was killed and several customers in the bar were wounded. Club owner Wilbert La Tour had reportedly balked at Squad demands for money, although he denied it to the police. Case still unsolved.

The Brass Rail was the scene of two other murders. Willie Ralph Duke, 24,

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Seeking a Piece of the Action: When local liquor stores refused to contribute money to Party programs in 1971, Newton and other Panthers organized a boycott

was a heroin dealer who, police informants said, was making payoffs to the Squad. He had reportedly missed a payment because he had lost the money gambling. While Duke was drinking at The Brass Rail on January 25, 1975, with three Panthers and club owner La Tour, Billy Carr approached Duke and suggested they step outside. Police have theorized that the 21-year-old Carr was attempting to warn Duke that he was going to be killed. As both men began to walk away from the bar, say witnesses, the three Panthers suddenly pulled guns. Two of them opened fire and shot Duke. Carr tried to stop them and was also shot. Both men died. Neither La Tour, who saw the shooting, nor the other witnesses would name the three gunmen. Case unsolved.

La Tour himself was found murdered four months later. Oakland police, acting on a tip that he was dead, went to La Tour's apartment and found his car gone. A week later another tip was received that La Tour's car could be found in the San Francisco International Airport garage with his dead body inside. It was. Long dead. The body had been stuffed head-first into a sleeping bag and jammed into the trunk of the car. Case unsolved.

- On April 26, 1975, Vernon McInnis, a dope dealer known on the streets as "Preacher Man," was gunned down by two shotgun blasts and five .45 caliber shots. Several days before his murder, McInnis had been approached in the Lamp Post to buy a copy of the Panther newspaper. He refused, reportedly saying that the Panthers "rip people off." The remark led to an argument with Panthers Robert Heard and George Robinson, both Squad members. McInnis was bounced from the bar and killed several days later. George Robinson was convicted of the murder, but the conviction was reversed because police had improperly conducted their search of his car when he was arrested. (The district attorney's office is appealing the reversal.) Although the motive established at the trial was the Lamp Post altercation, several sources familiar with the case believe the killing had much more to do with drug-related payoffs to Panthers.

- Two other shootings involving shotguns were thought to be the work of Panthers because the spent shells found at the scenes had markings almost identical to those in the McInnis case. Police could not act on the evidence, though, because there were no eyewitnesses (as there were in the McInnis case) and because shotgun casing marks are not as specific as those from hand guns. One case involved Philip Cole, an owner of the Black Knight bar. Cole was reported to have been the victim of Panther extortion, although he angrily denies it. On September 12, 1974, he was shot at on the street. (The bullets missed.) Cole could not identify his assailants. In the other case, a week before the Vernon McInnis murder, two men were shot soon after leaving the Lamp Post. Willie White lost both an arm and a leg in the shotgun blast, and James Harris died from the wounds he received in the back of the head. Both men had been in an argument with a Lamp Post cocktail waitress that had widened to include others. Case unsolved.

- In February 1975, one dope dealer was robbed at his home by two armed blacks in ski masks, and another dealer was kidnapped by three black men and killed. Police suspect the Panthers because of reports that both men were being shaken down by the Squad.

Finally, there is the still unexplained

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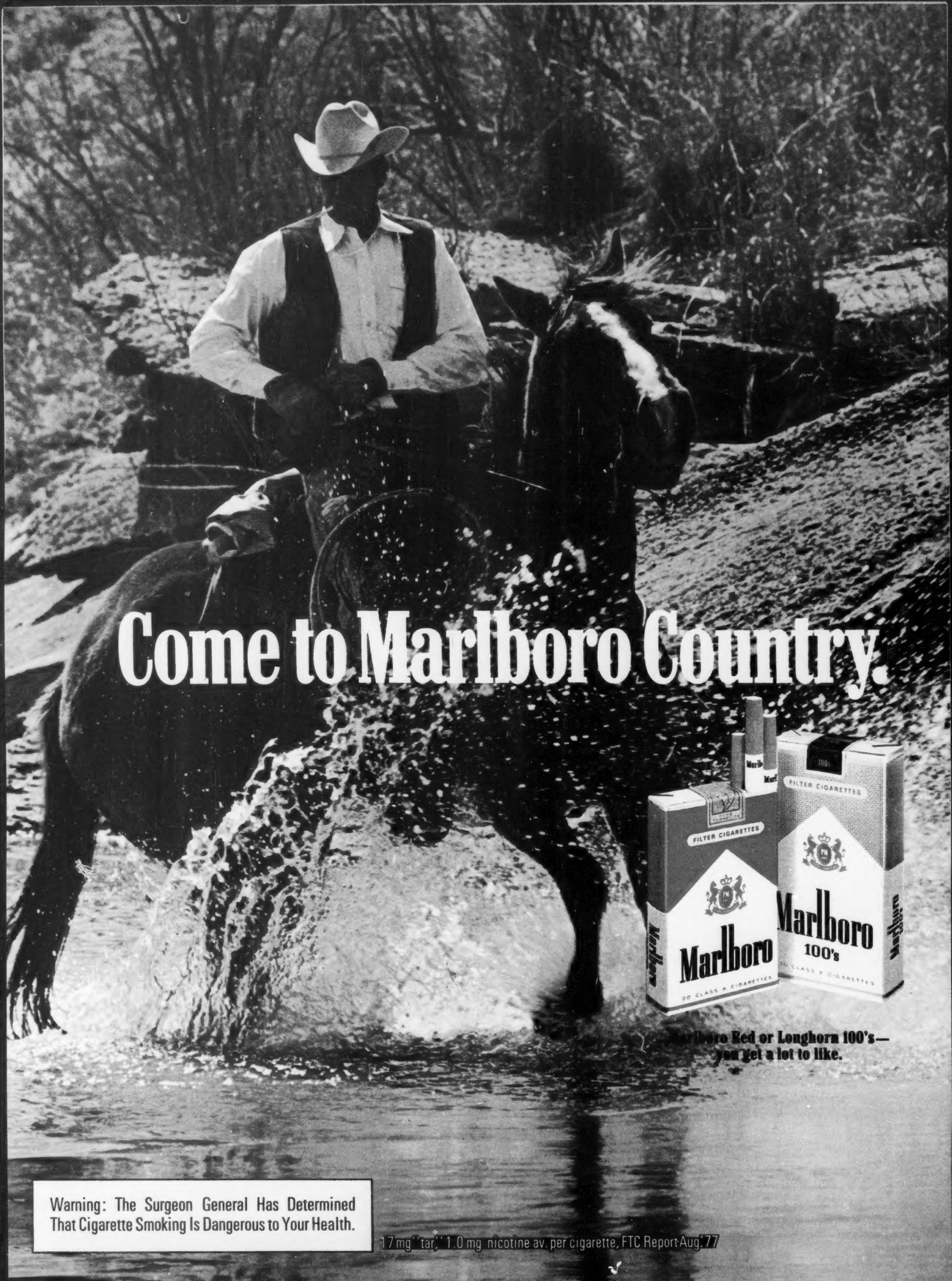
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murder of Betty Van Patter, the Party's attractive, 45-year-old white bookkeeper. She was a Berkeley liberal who dabbled in the more faddish aspects of the occult, but was nevertheless described by a former associate as "a first-rate bookkeeper, very responsible."

Van Patter landed her job in the summer of 1974. She was hired originally to keep books for the Panther school, but her duties expanded soon after to include bookkeeping for the Party itself and for the Lamp Post bar. Although pleased to be working for the Panthers, Van Patter told some friends that the Lamp Post was not paying its taxes, and that money was taken directly out of the cash register and passed along to Party members. Van Patter was known to be fastidious about her work, and she didn't like going along with accounting procedures she considered shaky.

Betty Van Patter disappeared on Friday, December 13, 1974, after having stopped in at one of her favorite Berkeley bars. She had entered alone, say acquaintances, and was unusually quiet. Several people who were in the bar recall that a black man came in, handed her a note and then left. Van Patter left the bar, alone, at about 9:30 p.m. and was never seen alive again. Her corpse was found 35 days later, floating in San Francisco Bay. Probable cause of death, said the coroner's report, was "a powerful blow to the skull." Death had been immediate.

It is not known whether the Panthers had anything to do with Van Patter's murder. But there are indications that Elaine Brown had grown irritated with the Party's bookkeeper. Asked about Van Patter after her disappearance, Brown angrily described her to a Panther colleague as an "idiot" and "stupid," charging that Van Patter wouldn't come to work if the "moon was out of phase." But her biggest complaint about Van Patter was that she was inquisitive, and vocal in her complaints about irregularities in the Party ledgers. "Betty wanted to know too much of everything," Elaine Brown confided. "And she was getting into the Lamp Post." In response, Brown told the colleague, she fired Van Patter. "I was scared of her getting into my [city council] campaign books and all the other stuff," Brown said. "She started asking about where money was going. She started telling me about why Jimmy's taxes need to be paid." (Jimmy Ward, Huey Newton's cousin, is the owner of the Lamp Post.)

Van Patter's murder could not have come at a worse time for Elaine Brown, who was then running for the Oakland City Council. Four days after the body was found, police questioned Brown in the office of Panther lawyer Charles Garry. She insisted she had terminated Betty Van Patter's employment on December 6—a full week before Van Patter's disappearance. Brown produced "copies" of Van Patter's severance check, work record and notice of termination to support her claims.

New Respectability: Elaine Brown became chairperson of the Party in 1974, after Newton fled to Cuba

But Fred Hiestand, a lawyer who has done work for the Party, told police he had seen Van Patter on Tuesday, December 10—on Panther business. The day after he saw Van Patter, Hiestand saw Elaine Brown. He told police Brown announced to him at that time her *intention* of firing Van Patter at the next opportunity.

If the discrepancies in Brown's statements had become public knowledge, her campaign could have collapsed. But none of it leaked. And the case is still unsolved.

As Elaine Brown ran the Party in Oakland (with the Panthers' new-found respectability untarnished by the violence police link to the squad), Huey Newton cooled his heels in Cuba. He had no particular desire to assimilate into the socialist society around him, Cuban sources say. Newton held no regular job; he hung out. And he closely watched developments in the United States (a Democrat in the White House, disclosures of FBI illegalities involving Panthers) and, of course, developments in Oakland. He picked his time—last summer—and returned to stand trial for the murder of Kathleen Smith and the beating of Preston Callins.

Newton must have been heartened by the favorable publicity that greeted his return. The press played up to him, dutifully recording his praise of the Cubans and his charges of police and FBI harassment of the Party. But while he may have been winning a public relations battle, his trial loomed ahead as a much tougher fight. Crystal Gray, the eyewitness to the Kathleen Smith shooting, was still firm in her identification of Newton as the killer, despite her admission that she suffered from night blindness and was high on marijuana at the time of the shooting.

Then came "Richmond"—the shorthand way that people in the Bay Area now refer to the frightening incident of October 23, 1977. After Richmond, the Party would begin quickly to crumble.

On that night last October, Mary Matthews, a 56-year-old black woman, was having trouble sleeping. Lying awake in bed, she heard someone tampering with the front door of her home in Richmond, California, 15 miles north of Oakland. It was about five a.m.

"Who is it?" she yelled.

No response. She thought whoever it was had gone away.

But a short time later she heard someone pulling on the screen door in the rear of her house. Mary Matthews called, "Who is it? What do you want?" There was no answer. The noises continued.

Quickly then, she leaped out of bed—although usually she is slow and considered in her movements. She retrieved her .38 revolver and, without wasting a gesture, dialed Richmond police. While holding the phone she heard the sudden sound of ripping metal and realized the screen door had been torn completely off its hinges.

Someone was out to kill her. It had to

"So then he hit me again, and he hit me and knocked me on the floor . . . he kicked me in the mouth, and by that time I was tired of being hit. . . I was bleedin' a lot"

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The Candidates: Bobby Seale and Elaine Brown leave Oakland City Hall after filing nomination papers in 1973—he for mayor of Oakland, she for a city council seat

be that, she thought, because there was so little in the house that anyone would want to steal.

As she recited her address to the police the first shot was fired outside. The lock, she thought, he's shooting off the lock. She dropped the telephone receiver on the floor, pointed the gun at the back door and fired. The very act of firing the gun she had kept for so long, but never used, panicked her further—that, and a fusillade of return fire, the muzzle flashes coming through the doorway and lighting up her kitchen. She ran to a small room in the rear of her house to hide, locking the door behind her. Cowering in there behind the furniture, it seemed forever before she heard the crackling of police radios that indicated she might finally be safe.

Outside Mary Matthews' door was a pool of blood and a 12-gauge shotgun. On the sidewalk lay the dead body of a black man. From the trail of smeared blood, police could tell the man had been dragged and then dropped; and the blood went beyond the dead body, indicating another assailant had been wounded. In searching the area along the Richmond ghetto street, a block of corrugated metal warehouses interspersed with a few houses and vacant lots, police found a second shotgun, an automatic rifle and ammunition. They also found discarded clothing similar to that worn by the dead man. From these items, police surmised there were at least three assailants, and that the discarded blue overalls and watch caps were probably donned to be shed after the killing in order to make eyewitness identification difficult. It was a cold, planned murder attempt.

But why Mary Matthews? It didn't make sense. What would anyone have against this middle-aged mother and grandmother who worked as a bookkeeper out of her own modest home?

The answer came from the pink clapboard house directly behind Mary Matthews'. She owns that house as well, renting its two apartments to single mothers with children. One of the women was dark-skinned and pretty, barely five feet tall. She approached the police and said she was the one the gunmen had come to kill, not Mary Matthews. She identified herself as Raphaelle Gary—known on the streets as Crystal Gray.

Newton was due in court the very next day, October 24, for a preliminary hearing in the Kathleen Smith murder case. Crystal Gray was also scheduled to be there to testify against him. (The charges involving the altercation with plainclothes cops at the Fox Lounge and the beating of the two young women at the Lamp Post were eventually reduced to misdemeanors and severed from the Smith and Preston Callins cases. All charges are still pending. The Smith-Callins trial will probably begin in August or September.)

It was hours before Richmond police verified the fingerprints of the body in blue overalls outside Mary Matthews' house. The dead man was Louis T. Johnson, a 27-year-old Black Panther who lived in Berkeley in a house with other Party members. In a preliminary autopsy performed later that day, a bullet was removed from the back of Johnson's skull. Mary Matthews was blameless—it was not her gun that had shot him. Johnson had been hit accidentally by one of his fellow assailants.

It was a botch. They had attacked the wrong house—and they failed to kill anyone but one of their own. Moreover, another of the assailants had been wounded in the hand, judging by one of

Photograph by StephenShames © 1978

the gloves police found on the scene: It was ripped and bloodied.

What had happened in Richmond was not publicly revealed until the following morning, when Deputy District Attorney Tom Orloff broke the bizarre news in Oakland's Municipal Court. In an outraged voice, Orloff called the incident in Richmond a "planned assassination" attempt of the "most important witness" in his case against Newton. Orloff linked the dead assailant to Newton, saying among other things that Johnson had recently visited Newton when he was briefly jailed after returning from Cuba. But outside the courtroom—free on $80,000 cash bail—Newton denied any involvement in, or knowledge of, the Richmond affair, hinting at nefarious doings by the police. "At this point I wouldn't be surprised if the police set anything up," he said. He claimed not to know Louis Johnson. (Crystal Gray was given police protection and began her testimony later that week.)

Newton's suggestions of a police setup looked unlikely when, four days later, it was revealed that Flores Forbes—a Squad member arrested with Newton at the Fox Lounge—had sought emergency treatment at an Oakland hospital for a gunshot wound in the hand consistent with the torn, bloody glove found in Richmond.

Forbes arrived at the hospital with his hand bandaged, using an old music book as a crude splint. Unwrapping the bandages, the attending physician saw that the whole back of Forbes' hand had been torn away. Forbes told the doctor he had been injured in an industrial accident with a rivet gun. The man who accompanied Forbes, Panther Nelson Malloy, backed his story, but the doctor knew a bullet wound when he saw one, and said he would have to report it to the police. At that, the two men fled the hospital.

After Newton jumped bail and fled to Cuba, Elaine Brown became Party chairperson. Under her leadership, the Panthers made impressive inroads into Oakland's political establishment

Publicity about Richmond was potentially so damaging to Newton's case, and the Party itself, that Newton finally agreed to meet with two reporters. Looking thinner than before he left for Cuba, Newton was attractively decked out in a pin-striped three-piece suit donned for a courtroom appearance earlier that day. He tried to convince the reporters that Panther Flores Forbes was only peripherally connected to the Party, but local newspapers had already revealed that Forbes was on the payroll of a Panther youth service program and was intimately involved in some of the Party's violent activities.

Sipping cognac, Newton conceded that the gunmen may have been "overzealous and figured that they would hunt down a witness." But he nevertheless denied that he or the Party were involved. He insisted that both Johnson and Forbes had quit the Party "a few weeks before the trial started. I don't remember exactly what date." But in any event, Newton said, they were no longer Panthers at the time of the Richmond attack.

A few days after that interview, several tourists in the Nevada desert about 40 miles from Las Vegas heard a moaning sound a few yards off the road. Then they noticed a man's feet sticking out from under a pile of rocks. The tourists snapped a Polaroid picture of the shallow grave and brought it to local rangers, who rushed to the site and unearthed a seriously wounded black man, buried alive and left for dead. He had been shot twice and was paralyzed from the neck down.

When Las Vegas police questioned him in the hospital, the man gave a fake name and said he had been robbed and shot while hitchhiking; eventually, though, he admitted to police that he was Nelson Malloy, the man who had accompanied Flores Forbes to the Oakland hospital the day after the Richmond assault. The story Malloy finally told sounded like something out of the annals of the Mafia—loyal soldiers turning on other loyalists when ordered from above.

Forbes, Malloy said, had come to his house after the attempt on Mary Matthews' life. Malloy had only recently arrived in Oakland, summoned by Newton bodyguard Robert Heard. Before that, Malloy had worked in the Panthers' small Winston-Salem, North Carolina, chapter to set up a free ambulance service for poor blacks in the community. He was dedicated, a believer. After moving west, Malloy went to

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Panthers as Victims: Gunman Louis Johnson (left) was killed in the Richmond attack and Squad member Flores Forbes (far right) was wounded. Forbes then fled to Las Vegas with the help of Panther Nelson Malloy (center), who was later shot and left for dead

work at the Party's free health clinic in Berkeley, impressing clinic personnel with his diligence and aptitude.

Perhaps Forbes went to Malloy for help because of his paramedic skills. Malloy bandaged Forbes' shattered hand and wrapped it in the music book splint, but his medical experience was insufficient and he knew it. He told Forbes that surgery was necessary, and that he could not perform it.

It was then that the two men went to the hospital in Oakland, only to flee in fear that the doctor would turn them in. According to Malloy's account to police, they remained in hiding until Oakland Panther Rollin Reid drove them to the airport the next day. Forbes and Malloy took a Western Airlines flight to Las Vegas. There they were met by Panther Allen Lewis, who drove Forbes to a Las Vegas hospital where he was treated under a phony name. Malloy told police that both Reid and Lewis arrived several days later at his hotel room with "orders" to drive him to Houston because Las Vegas was getting "too hot." Malloy dutifully climbed in the back of a rented van and the three left Las Vegas.

About 45 minutes later, Malloy said, Reid and Lewis stopped the van for a "rest break." Malloy said he was standing beside the van when the two men pulled pistols and shot him in the back and left arm. He dropped to the ground but remained conscious while they dragged him off the roadway and piled rocks on top of him.

Malloy believes—and police in the Bay Area agree—that Flores Forbes was executed by Lewis and Reid. Police describe the shooting of Malloy and the probable murder of Forbes as a "house-cleaning" effort to prevent any possible implication of Panther higher-ups who may have ordered the Richmond assassination attempt. Lewis and Reid, being sought for the shooting of Malloy, have disappeared.

Much of the support for Huey Newton prior to Richmond began to seriously erode when the dead gunman outside Mary Matthews' home proved to be Panther Louis Johnson. The chilling account told by the permanently paralyzed Nelson Malloy about Forbes, Lewis and Reid seemed to confirm the Party's involvement in Richmond. And when the Bay Area press heavily covered Malloy's release from the Las Vegas hospital, in a wheelchair, and his return home to a Winston-Salem hospital ward aboard a plane chartered by his aggrieved family and old friends, the Panthers had never looked worse. Alameda County Supervisor John George, for example, a long-time Newton supporter, was deeply troubled by the direction the Party had taken.

But suddenly there was another blow, and it had the potential to harm Newton and the Party in the local political arena as much as the Richmond and Malloy incidents: Party chairperson Elaine Brown had disappeared.

The disappearance triggered rumors that Brown might be dead. She wasn't, but there were other accounts that she had been physically beaten in a climactic power struggle with Newton after his return. So persistent were these reports that in Los Angeles (where Brown had reportedly fled after a speedy exodus from her Oakland apartment in the middle of the night), police circulated to local hospitals a description of her alleged injuries—severe swelling of one eye and a broken nose.

Nearly a month after her disappearance, Brown's letter of resignation from the Party was finally made public in the Bay Area press. Saying her decision to quit was "made with Huey's understanding," she wrote of "unhappiness in personal matters . . . My mental and physical strength, after 10 years, were waning, in fact nearly collapsing." A doctor who has treated Party members says, however, that colleagues in Los Angeles told him that Brown did receive the injuries described in police circulars, and that she was treated for them. (Repeated attempts to reach Elaine Brown were unsuccessful. She did not respond to messages left for her at an office in Los Angeles where she is reportedly editing film scripts and writing songs.)

The theories surrounding Brown's sudden departure have run the gamut from unrequited love for Newton (who married his long-time secretary, Gwen Fontaine, in Cuba) to opposition to the Richmond assassination attempt, to the reassertion of male dominance of the Party now that Newton had returned. But whatever the reason, her resignation, along with Newton's return and the Richmond attack, began to signal the end of the Party's era of legitimacy. Richmond, especially, was a jolt to many sympathizers, who now found it impossible to overlook reports of Panther brutality.

The Party's problems were soon compounded by disclosures that Panthers had mismanaged investments and government grants. The grants had been administered by an offshoot of the nonprofit Educational Opportunities Cor-

Photos L. to R.: Oakland Tribune, Biff Ray, Oakland Tribune

Whiskey Sour
White Vodka Sour
Daiquiri
Bloody Mary
Grasshopper
Strawberry Margarita
Mai Tai

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Pina Colada
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Promoting a Gentler Side: Newton poses last fall next to a bus carrying Panther school children

poration (EOC). This offshoot, the EOC Service Corporation, was created under Elaine Brown's leadership to run the Party's school. One man formerly close to the Panthers says that funds channeled through the EOC Service Corporation were used to "keep the Squad sweet," meaning to establish steady income and fringe benefits for the heavies. This was confirmed in part by a newspaper account that grant dollars approved for Panther programs paid the rent for Robert Heard and Squad member Larry Henson in an expensive apartment on Oakland's Lake Shore Avenue. Oakland *Tribune* reporters Pearl Stewart and Lance Williams broke that story and also reported that Heard and Henson, as well as Flores Forbes and another Panther facing serious charges, were all on the payrolls of the Party's grant-funded projects.

When he learned of the Panthers' financial irregularities last fall, Oakland Mayor Lionel Wilson resigned from the board of the Party's school, where he had served even before his election. A city audit of publicly funded Panther programs, meanwhile, showed a wide pattern of irregularities. (For example, investigators could find no evidence that Panthers on the programs' payrolls were even "physically in attendance," although their paychecks were cashed, bearing signatures that looked like possible forgeries to city auditors.) These irregularities might have been overlooked, or allowed to be rectified by the Party, were it not for the controversy surrounding Newton and the Richmond affair. Eventually, when the city council voted to cancel Oakland's contracts with the Panthers, the move was uncontested. (Mayor Wilson abstained because of his former board position.) Some in Oakland think the city council action still might not have been so drastic if the Panthers had not, on one particular application for school grants, listed Newton as the head of the EOC. "It was just plain stupid of the Party," one observer says. "They should have kept Huey completely out of it."

Mismanagement and misappropriation are old charges against the Panthers when it comes to money. One doctor who formerly worked at the Party's free health clinic says bitterly that "the clinic always came last." Funds awarded to the health facility by the City of Berkeley "were frequently siphoned off and used for other projects, like Bobby Seale's campaign for mayor [of Oakland in 1973]," the doctor says.

Amazingly, the Party has maintained a steady flow of money over the years, despite grumblings from some supporters that money went only to the highest echelon of the Party, and that Newton let other members rot in jail while he and ranking Panthers always made bail.

Considering all the money donated to the Panthers, the Party by now could have been financially solid if there had been careful investment and moderate spending. But there wasn't. "They could have been big, real big, as rich as the Muslims," one former supporter says. "But they blew it. They were always fucking up with money." Several weeks ago, the IRS put a $200,000 lien against the now-defunct Stronghold Consolidated Productions, Inc., the New York-based Panther corporation set up to handle the flow of money from Newton's books. The corporation, which also purchased real estate for the Party, was accused by the IRS of not paying its corporate taxes from 1971 to 1973. There is even some indication that the IRS might hold Newton personally accountable for the money. If he or the Party as a whole must pay the lien, it could well bankrupt both.

Now there is no one left in the Party with any power to challenge Newton's supremacy. The identification of the Panthers with Newton and Newton alone is complete. "I am we," he has sometimes said, and one suspects he sees himself as inseparable from the

Photograph by Roger Ressmeyer © 1978

The cash register of Nettie's speaks to the computers of Needham.

PEACE
ANNIV
THE GRADUATE
MARRY ME!
BON VOYAG
YOU'RE
GOOD LUCK
BREAK A LEG
GET WELL SOONER
I LOVE YOU
GRIN AND BEAR IT
5400

(Frank Kirtien Jr., Vice-President of Nettie's Flower Garden, wreathed in smiles.)

"Contrary to popular belief, life in the flower business is no bed of roses.

"It's a jungle out there.

"And although, as Vice-President of the largest flower business in St. Louis, I'm an expert on the likes of Floridian gladioli, Dutch parrot tulips and South American carnations, what I used to know about media buying did not amount to a hill of beans.

"So, like my competition, I depended on radio, local newspapers and the inevitable neighborhood grapevine.

"But as my business began to branch out from corsages to conventions, bouquets to banquets, I wanted a media buy that would reach more successful businessmen without nipping too far into my advertising budget.

"Then last year, my advertising agency—Harris McKenna Meng—told me about MNI.

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"And our business has grown bigger than ever, while—unfortunately—the flower industry in general has wilted slightly. If there's a smell sweeter than roses, it's success."

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That's where we come in. We're Reading is Fundamental, a non-profit, reading motivation program with hundreds of local programs in communities like yours all across the country.

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And thanks. From a lot of kids you don't know yet.

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL

This is a public service message on behalf of Reading Is Fundamental and this magazine.

DET 11/4

Party. What he does, Newton has written, he does in the name of all black people.

But what he has done, in fact, is to destroy the Party he created. The grants are gone now. The clinic and school still have their doors open, but the Panther newspaper has published only intermittently in recent months. Each week brings more defections from the already decimated Party. They often take place unnoticed, but the impact is great—as when newspaper editor Michael Fultz quietly slipped out of town in May. It was people like Fultz who did the backbreaking legitimate work of the Party. Now, what remains is an isolated Huey Newton, surrounded by his muscle and his lawyers.

New Times recently asked Newton for an interview but he declined. He would grant one, he said, if this story concerned the Panther school—and only the school.

Even as Newton awaits trial on the Smith-Callins charges, violence continues to swirl around him and the Party. At 4 a.m. on a Sunday in late March—two days after an Alameda County board recommended to the Oakland City Council that grant money for the Panthers be cut off—a $5,000 Datsun 260 Z belonging to Oakland *Tribune* reporter Pearl Stewart was fire-bombed. Two hours earlier, a separate fire had been set in a boxcar next to a *Tribune* warehouse. The door of the boxcar had been pried open and the newsprint stored inside torched.

Stewart had been writing articles critical of the Panthers for months. Coincidentally, she lived in the apartment building where Panthers Henson and Heard had lived until it was revealed (in one of her stories) that their apartment was paid for with EOC grant money. Stewart says the locks on the security garage, where her car was parked, had not been changed since Heard and Henson moved out. (Although she points out that the garage could be entered without a resident key if someone were intent upon doing so.) The fire-bombing incident was a chilling reminder of Richmond, and it was not lost on the Oakland City Council, which acted the following day to halt *all* funds for the Panthers.

Newton spends much of his time these days in Santa Cruz, where he is working toward a doctorate at the University of California. He is in a program called "History of Consciousness." Enrolling at Santa Cruz shortly after returning from Cuba helped bolster his public image; and Newton also scored points by landing an appointment in February as a student teacher at Merritt College, a nonpaying job that will count toward his Ph.D. (Newton's brother Melvin runs the school's liberal arts department.) It didn't matter that Newton showed up late for his first class, looking and sounding as if he had a hangover (he had been celebrating his 36th birthday the night before). It mattered only that the job carried respectability.

But even as he pursues his Ph.D. there are reports that Newton has returned to his old routines. Once again he is said to be frequenting the bars in Oakland and Berkeley, accompanied by Squad members. And once again stories of extortion demands are making the rounds. "He's back to his same old stuff," one source says, "hitting up the clubs, the pimps and the dope dealers." Not all of the barroom sorties involve extortion. On May 11, in the small town of Seacliff, 20 miles south of Santa Cruz, Newton and Robert Heard got into a barroom fight with a 26-year-old white, Kenny Hall. The sheriffs' office has been unable to reconstruct the events precisely but has determined that during the fight at least one handgun was drawn and at least two shots were fired. Heard and Newton were both seen with a gun, according to the sheriffs' office. Hall was unarmed. Afterward, Newton and Heard fled the bar but were arrested later that night. Kenny Hall was treated for a minor head injury, suffered when he was knocked into a glass divider.

Police in the Bay Area find the situation frustrating. Their hands are tied because victims and witnesses will rarely step forward to testify against Newton or his friends. Police cite the recent incident at the Cafe D'Elegance, an after-hours club in Berkeley. Newton was there, making his rounds, when a pimp reportedly accosted him and complained about the shake-downs of his women. Newton, said one witness, ordered his bodyguards to draw their guns. No one was permitted to leave while Newton ranted and lectured his captive audience on political theory for about a half-hour. But nobody in the club that night ever pressed charges.

Each week brings more defections from the Party. Now, what remains is an isolated Huey Newton, surrounded by his muscle and his lawyers

Undoubtedly, much of the reluctance to testify against Newton stems from fear. But there is also a lingering feeling among some blacks and white radicals that Newton was once an important leader in the fight for equality, and that sending him to prison would serve the interests of racists.

The Seacliff brawl made local headlines and prompted Deputy District Attorney Tom Orloff back in Oakland to ask that Newton's bail in the Smith-Callins case be raised from $80,000 (which Newton had posted in cash) to $200,000. (Panther watchers were already amazed at the speed with which Newton had raised the $50,000 cash bail for the Seacliff incident.) After several days, the judge in the Smith-Callins case set an additional cash bail for Newton at $75,000. Newton showed up in court on May 19, the day the bail decision was to be handed down, with a slew of supporters from the Party, including Panther school children, to face the crowd of reporters. At his side was his wealthy, long-time supporter, Hollywood producer Bert Schneider. Newton was placed in custody for a scant 15 minutes before the extra $75,000 surety bond came through. When it did, he was released. (On June 15, news broke that Newton's lawyer, Sheldon Otis, had bowed out of the case and been replaced by Michael Kennedy, a close friend of Schneider's.)

Now it appears to be a waiting game all around. The police, stymied by reluctant witnesses, won't move against Newton without solid evidence, for there is sensitivity about Panther cries of police harassment. Besides, law enforcement officials believe they have a solid case against Newton on the current charges, and that he will be put away. Victims of continuing Panther extortion are also waiting. Their attitude is, Why bother doing something about it now? Why risk trouble when it will be resolved in the courts? Huey will be convicted, and the rest of them will be too weak to continue.

But some believe that Newton will do anything to avoid prison, despite his boast years ago that he could do hard time because there was a side of him that liked solitude. These observers believe Newton will jump bail and leave the country once again—although it is not certain whether Cuba would receive him so readily this time.

And there are others who think Newton is intent on self-destruction, on going down in a blaze of glory. Look at the titles of his books, they say—*To Die for the People* and *Revolutionary Suicide*. ●

Fran Lebowitz Snarls for Our Sins

...And we have the good taste to laugh

by Paul Rudnick

The hotel room features lime-green polyester sheets. The author, who is to occupy said hotel room, has been forced to get up *before* noon to catch the air shuttle to Boston, the second stop in a 14-city cross-country publicity tour. And a smarmy radio host in a plaid leisure suit recently (and he was dead sober) referred to her as "hip and contempo."

Fran Lebowitz is in heaven: she can complain. . . . And get paid for it.

Metropolitan Life, Lebowitz's first book (and the reason for her bedding down in synthetics), is a collection of essays, the subjects of which range from sleep ("death without the responsibility") to clothing with slogans on it ("If people don't want to hear from *you*, what makes you think they want to hear from your sweater?") to children, who (surprise) come off barely scathed ("Not a single member of the underage set has yet to propose the word 'chairchild' ").

A slim volume ("We used the largest possible type without making it a book for blind people"), it was originally expected to be simply a New York cult success—if that—probably because some of the trendier topics include discos, homosexual one-night stands and mood jewelry, and because her writing possesses a distinctly urban tone. The first press run was 6,000 copies. Then a review in the *New York Times* proclaimed Lebowitz "an important humorist in the classic tradition," and a surprising number of Texans began to shell out $8.50 for the book. *Metropolitan Life* quickly went into a second, third, etc. printing—over 85,000 copies have been printed to date—and a few weeks ago Fawcett paid Dutton, the hardcover publisher, $150,000 for the paperback rights. Why? Not even her agent knows for sure. There was only a minor advertising push, and yet Dutton claims the book is "walking out of the stores."

Since then Fran has been deluged with film and TV offers, most of which she has refused. "Why," she says, "should someone say, 'Gee, that Lily Tomlin is funny,' when it's my line?" The *New York Times* Book Review wants to know what she's doing on her summer vacation, along with John Updike, Saul Bellow, et al. The papers want to photograph her sleeping in the afternoon and attacking house plants with a cleaver. And the receptionist at Dutton tells visitors that Lebowitz is her *favorite* writer. At the moment Fran is contemplating a move from the one-room Greenwich Village apartment that she shares with a hot plate and a hide-a-bed, but there are more pressing concerns. Suddenly thousands of Americans want Fran to tell them just how tacky their mobile homes and day-glo jogging suits are, so Lebowitz has gone on the road as a professional wit, bringing Manhattan malevolence to the Heartland.

Boston: the hotel room with polyester sheets, an achingly red nylon shag rug, a sculptured formica headboard and an ersatz wood-grain TV set that shows soft-core porn. Lebowitz gazes longingly through the jungle-print fiberglass curtains at the luxurious Ritz-Carlton a few blocks away. (It was, alas, booked-up.) Two nervous boys from the *Harvard Crimson* sit on the battered Lucite chairs and confront Lebowitz with their expensive tape recorder. They are wearing LaCoste shirts and khaki pants. Fran, sitting cross-legged on the bed, chain smokes. She sports her standard Brooks Brothers' man's oxford cloth shirt, navy blazer, straight-leg Levi's and penny loafers. The room looks like a Choate reunion.

Fran Lebowitz is a short woman with a tall face: narrow, dark eyes; permanently arched eyebrows; and what Harold Robbins would refer to as a "full, cruel mouth." Her dark hair is shoulder length and aggressively clean. The style is fresh-scrubbed, natural fiber and crisply classic—sort of Jewish Charlie Girl—and a little menacing. That much good taste means business. Her demeanor seems to radiate a single thought: "Don't get on my nerves." Operating from this position of tough-cookie power, Fran simultaneously charms and terrorizes the college boys; they are a little awed by her rapid-fire, vituperative patter. Yet she is also quite sweet; she listens attentively to their jokes, and rewards them with a surprisingly shy smile. She knows how to work the crowd.

The media are discussed: "My favorite magazine?" she says. "*Sepia*. It's the poor man's *Ebony*. *Ebony* prints articles about Negroes who become movie stars or multimillionaire sports figures; *Sepia* prints articles about any Negro who has a job. *Sepia* makes *Ebony* look like the *Yellow Book*." Later Lebowitz will claim she is not racist, merely "universally prejudiced."

The Harvard boys giggle, blush, fumble with the tape recorder. They ask about sports, a safer topic which they obviously hope Fran will elevate to the risqué. "I have an aesthetic aversion to overly zestful pursuits, like jogging," she replies. "Fat people should run in place inside their houses. But miniature golf—that's the Sport of Kings." She also admits she loves to gamble: "There is nothing I don't like about Las Vegas. It is the Athens of America." The preppies are completely disarmed; they are prepared to sign away their trust funds for an autograph. Lebowitz inscribes their copies of *Metropolitan Life*, "Thanks for the memories." They depart; a moment later they are back, begging Fran to have dinner with them. She assents.

Lebowitz has spent most of her 27 years developing this devastating public persona, and she has been quite enjoying her new rep as Grouch-Goddess. She wants more than a classy literary reputation—which she's got, thanks to overwhelmingly favorable reviews in grade-A publications. She wants a personality cult and is honest about it.

"I was in Canada, on a talk show," she says. "Afterwards, the publicist told me there was a group of fans waiting outside, so they would sneak me out the

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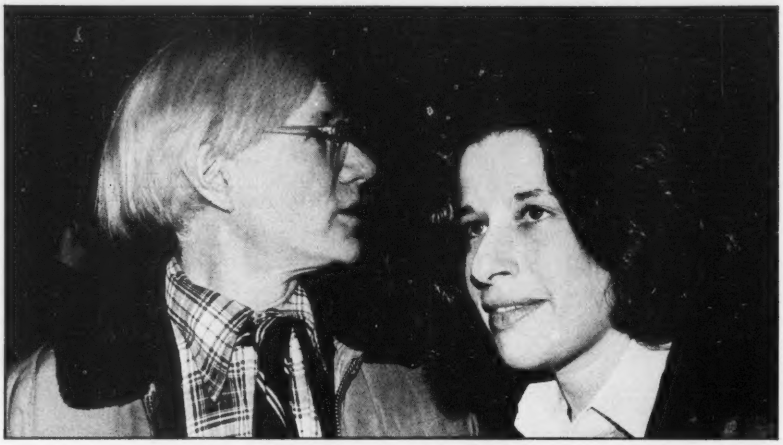
Paul Rudnick, who also wields a witty insult, recently endured Joe Brooks for New Times.

Photograph by Lane Berkwit



Camping Out: Andy Warhol and Lebowitz assume their party postures

back. She said she knew I wouldn't want to be disturbed by autograph hounds. I said, 'Listen, what would I rather be doing than being mobbed by people who love what I do?' I consider autographing books the ultimate human activity."

Despite her jaded, hypercritical pose, Lebowitz is not really a cynic. Success has made a skeptical child suddenly realize that, for once, there are enough Christmas gifts under the tree. Of course, next year she wants two trees . . .

Although much of Lebowitz's writing relies on the epigram, her conversation relies on comment, sensibility, the I-can't-help-it-this-is-the-way-I-talk observation. Her style is all constant, murmured throwaway patter. She does not wait for laughs. So when Tom Snyder, the California talk show host with Dacron acetate in his voice, had her on his program, he missed half of her lines because he expected the violence of his own sit-com humor: build-up, bellowed punch line, pause for boffo yuck. Lebowitz preferred talking about the significance of "virgin acrylic," "fresh frozen" and the van shaped like a huge can of Vanish she saw prowling L.A. "looking for a reservoir to disinfect."

Fortunately, Lebowitz does not need Tom Snyder to provide inspiration for a new attack on tastelessness. She was, after all, born in New Jersey, in Morristown, where she was "not considered witty, but fresh. Not to be published, but to be punished." She wrote a novel in elementary school entitled *The Secret Castle*, and she's now "thinking of turning it into a film." She was thrown out of high school "for general incorrigibility." The high school later burned down: "I was upset," she admits, "not because the building was destroyed but because it was empty at the time."

She fought incessantly with her parents during her adolescence, and when a talk show isn't going well, or room service refuses to answer, Lebowitz assumes the attitude of what must have been the surliest teenager in north Jersey. Her eyes narrow, she gobbles cigarettes and her speech becomes tight-lipped and terse: "I am calling my publicist immediately. I refuse to ever, ever stay at any Sheraton hotel, ever again. *Where* is the goddamn *taxi*?" She was probably thrown out of high school for glaring a Home Ec teacher to death.

Lebowitz is on excellent terms with her family today, and she returns to Morristown frequently. "My parents are finally proud of me," she says. "My mother loves giving interviews; she starts with my birth and continues to the present day." At 18, however, she was sent to live with an uncle—"a German military engineer"—in Poughkeepsie, New York, for several months. She escaped to Manhattan, joining a late sixties/early seventies mix of rock musicians, art directors and Warhol superstars (including a transvestite named Silva Thin) who convened at Max's Kansas City, a downtown restaurant which has since become a punk rock stronghold.

This was not yet the era for Fran's gifts. Fashionable tastes revolved around music, camp and good karma. Style was a really fabulous pair of thirties opera gloves with sequined palm trees on them, not a hardcover book without any pictures. So Fran became a poet, giving readings of what she now refers to as "dreadful adolescent whining" to a small but devoted cult at the Village Vanguard and "1,000 speed freaks at a rock festival at a motel in the Catskills." She held a variety of odd jobs (which she refuses to list on her book jacket, referring to them as terminally "cutesie"), including ushering at the infamous New York debut of the Cockettes, a transvestite troupe from San Francisco. Opening night was a glittering Gotham social event, and Lebowitz showed Gore Vidal and an unknown female companion to their seats: "I just couldn't figure out who she was, but I knew her face. I thought she might be a friend; then I realized she was Angela Lansbury. I was so flustered I said, 'Oh, I'm sorry Miss Lansbury, I thought you were a drag queen I used to know.'" She claims she is still owed $90 for her services, and is "mad as hell."

Lebowitz did know most of the eminent drag queens of the early seventies. She was there at the climactic moment when Candy Darling ("Who was as close to being Marilyn Monroe as any boy is likely to get") first met Divine (the 300-pound star of *Pink Flamingoes*): "Everyone expected fireworks, but they got along quite well. They talked about lipstick and supermarkets."

Society transvestites, along with other glamour-seekers of the early seventies, have fallen by the wayside recently; they have not become respectable, accepted best sellers like Fran, who attributes this to the fact that would-be Joan Crawfords tend to have "longings," while she had "ambition."

Lebowitz's fierce, acknowledged ambition is certainly a Me Decade phenomenon; she wants establishment, big money, anthologized success. She wants to be loved by Johnny Carson and the *New York Review of Books*. "No one wants underground success any more," she claims. They want prime-time, white people's parties, suite-at-the-Plaza fame and glory. An ex-friend feels Fran "has really sold out. But she probably never had all that much imagination anyway. She's like somebody who would rather have straight A's than a good time smoking in the bathroom."

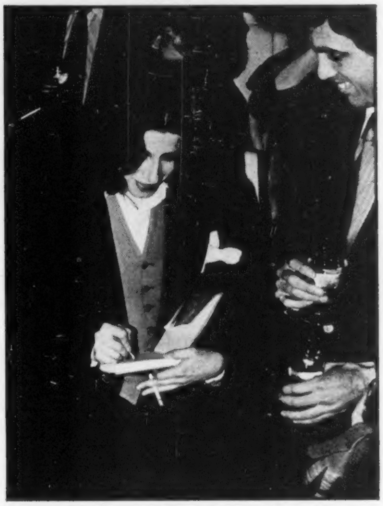
Lebowitz's pose is neither establishment lackey nor avant-garde artiste; she has followed the Noel Coward tradition of an intensely civilized, titillating frivolity. Her work is marvelously entertaining and intentionally superficial; any subversiveness is masked by a declaration of triviality. She can insult anyone she likes, as long as the offense is smothered in charm and wit. It is a remarkably difficult tightrope to navigate: The social excommunication of a Lenny Bruce lies on one side, the fawning mindlessness of a society columnist on the other. Fran has held her own so far; the disco fans and plant owners she vilifies are among her greatest fans. And she has not disowned her Max's Kansas City, fuck-me pump beginnings, either. She recently filmed a cameo appearance in John Waters' (the director of *Pink Flamingoes*) latest camp/horror classic, *Desperate Living*, in which she played a tourist in Mortville, a town ruled by an immense black lesbian who kills people by sitting on them. Unfortunately, her role was eliminated in the final cut.

Lebowitz began her professional writing career with book and movie reviews at *Changes*, a now-defunct "alternative culture" magazine. From there she went to a movie column at *Andy Warhol's Interview*, a tabloid consisting of vaguely social types reporting on their brunches,

Photographs by J. Richard Colbert

favorite designers and drug preferences, a sort of *Women's Wear Daily* without the industry reports on pocketbook sales. Lebowitz covered exploitation movies like *Black Mama, White Mama* ("At last, a reason for integration"), but was eventually banned from press screenings when producers realized the implications of a film's appearance in a column entitled "The Best of the Worst." After a year's absence, she returned to *Interview* and began her "I Cover the Waterfront" pieces. These essays form the core of *Metropolitan Life*, along with reprints from "The Lebowitz Report" in *Mademoiselle*.

Mademoiselle?!? "Fran just killed me. I love her New York Jewish gallows humor," says senior editor Mary Cantwell, one of those few magazine editors who trust their instinct and obsessions.



By the same token, Lebowitz did not particularly tone herself down for *Mademoiselle*'s readership. Her column attacking plants (" . . . a plant is really not the sort of thing one ought to have around the house [unless] in death it has achieved dignity by becoming a nice white linen sheet") provoked unprecedented outrage in sorority houses all over America. Letters poured in: I mean really, Miss Know-It-All, they're *living things*, they make flowers sometimes and can really perk up a dreary dorm. Her association with *Mademoiselle* ended about a year ago, mainly because there were deadline problems: "I tend to wait until four a.m. on the night before something is due—then I sit down with a yellow legal pad."

The columns (she never does one-shot pieces) led to Fran's contract with Dutton, where she was nearly a year late delivering the book. "I hate writing. I will do anything to avoid it. The only way I could write less was if I was dead." Her original editor, Laurie Colwin, says, "Lots of writers have deadline problems. Fran's book was actually the easiest editing job I've ever done. It just came floating into the office with a little halo around it." The book was finally published in March: "Before the reviews," Fran recalls, "I used to stand in front of Doubleday's and try to talk strangers into buying a copy."

Critics have tended to group Lebowitz with either the neighborhood kitchen wits (Erma Bombeck, Peg Bracken) or the Great American Humorists, like Twain, S. J. Perelman, Woody Allen and, inevitably, Dorothy Parker. Lebowitz dislikes the Bombeck comparisons. ("We're just not similar, and Jean Kerr is much better in that territory, anyway.") She is obviously insulted at having her more erudite wit linked with the Johnny-ate-another-box-of-crayons-today school. She finds Perelman's work a trifle whimsical for her taste, although she admires Allen's screenwriting partner, Marshall Brickman, for creating "Fin-Ray, the tuna-flavored soft drink." The Dorothy Parker bit crops up on every talk show and in most reviews; and it's an annoying refrain, since it often implies a female bitchiness that masks personal despair.

> **"I consider autographing books the ultimate human activity"**

Lebowitz is just too healthy for the Parker myth; she can't even drink or take drugs (she has hypoglycemia). She is attractive, and she despises nostalgia. Perhaps people refuse to accept the notion of a happy malcontent.

So if Lebowitz is not really anything like Parker, Bombeck or Perelman, then just what is America responding to? To her crankiness, certainly, her appreciation of how difficult daily life is becoming: "Life is a series of annoyances," she says. "One day I walked out of my apartment building and a man told me not to do that, since they were filming *Kojak* in the neighborhood. I said, 'I'm sorry, but I have to do my laundry.' They wanted me to be happy just watching the filming. I told them they could come upstairs and watch me write." Lebowitz tends not to attack individuals, only groups (graphic artists, landlords, etc.), movements (EST) and inanimate objects. This tendency is probably equal parts playing it safe and a genuine attempt at less parochial writing. In conversation, however, she will occasionally direct her remarks at specific people: "Erica Jong is not a human being: She's a genre."

Lebowitz's cleverness, and her considerable charm, take the sting out of any offense. More important, there is a sense of shared awareness in her work as well, an implicit agreement that the reader is as smart as the author, since they both see the absurdity of the situation under discussion. Lebowitz is everyone's smart-ass, perpetually annoyed best friend. Laurie Colwin thinks of her as "someone you'd like to take anywhere, just to hear what she'd have to say about things."

Everyone wants to hear what Fran thinks of their Fiorucci outfits, their European friends, their modular furniture and, of course, their enemies. Even if she hates your new hairstyle, you have still become the proud owner of a prized Lebowitz bon mot. Fran enjoys the challenge of living by her silver tongue: The expectations of others feed her wit (she claims to get most of her ideas for columns during lengthy phone conversations with friends). But don't steal her lines: "That is the absolute worst thing I can imagine—worse than child murder. I have tried to sue people when my lines have appeared, uncredited, in their own work, but I never had enough money for legal fees."

Lebowitz promotes the paradox of maliciousness and popularity. She revels in her crankiness, and feels that "almost all good humor is negative—what's funny about a cheery person?" Simple grouchiness, or mere adolescent sneering, is not really amusing. Style, a reverence for language and a worship of the well-turned phrase, are the fundamentals of Lebowitz's craft. This worship can result in the seemingly effortless, cutting delight found in the work of Lebowitz's idol, Oscar Wilde: the exhilaration of a mathematically concise slur. Fran often achieves this transcendent joy of perfect insult, but occasionally a labored wordiness mars her pieces. She claims she never begins a new sentence until the previous one is perfected: Sometimes the sweat shows.

Is Lebowitz's wit intrinsically "so, so New Yorky," as declared a Boston radio hostess who felt she understood Fran's work on a truly visceral level because she had visited Studio 54 on two separate occasions? Laurie Colwin doesn't think so: "Fran's writing has, in its way, a very cozy voice. She's very moral—she's on the side of good food and common sense. It's a voice of shared outrage at how the quality of life has deteriorated over the years. This is true all over the country. Fran is a true American original." Fran feels that "people are annoyed all over, but there are more solid acres of dogshit and digital clocks in cities. There are also more people to complain to. But, ultimately, you don't have to live in New York to get upset over annoyances or appreciate the anger of others."

This may be true, but is is important to remember that *People* magazine, a nationwide supermarket sell-out, carries a picture of some celebrity at Regine's, Studio 54 or Elaine's every week. The Heartland hates New York, but it likes to keep checking to make sure things *are* that decadent and filthy in the Apple. *Metropolitan Life* assures them that, yes, homosexuals in halter tops and leather underwear do snort cocaine on every Manhattan street corner, and at the same time assures them that Fran disapproves because such practices are boring and hold up traffic.

The "New Yorky" quality of Lebowitz's work, which may occasionally boost sales in Wisconsin, is about as partisan as she gets. She refuses to identify herself with any political groups; declarations of feminism, she feels, can lead to that constrictive classification as a "woman writer," along with Jong, Ephron and the rest of the I-left-my-husband-in-San-Francisco mafia. She is, she says, "a writer or nothing, not a contributor to 'women's literature.' Lebowitz continually stresses her position as a solo act, the target for all credit or blame. She would not want to be the house wit for NOW, because politics can be humorless: "Soon women doctors will want to be called 'Ds.'" And she regrets allowing *Titters*, a glossy anthology of women's humor, to reprint part of an *Interview* column: "It was a vulgar, adolescent book. But I needed the money at the time."

Lebowitz has acquired a large gay audience through such columns as "Notes on Trick" ("One man's trick is another man's design assistant"), a piece she tried to place "in every major magazine except TV Guide" in search of a wider audience. It ended up in *Interview* (regarded as a gay cult publication) and was reprinted in *Christopher Street*, an openly gay arts and politics magazine, after having been rejected everywhere else. Lebowitz may not publicly advocate gay rights, but she wants those jokes. Meanwhile she declares that she "does not write for any exclusive group. Nobody should care about writers' personal lives—it's not important." However, when asked if she felt the old rumor of a tryst between Julie Christie and Lauren Hutton held any truth, she replied, "I doubt it. I did hear that Lorne Greene and Arthur Godfrey were living together, though." She also felt the possible Rock Hudson-Jim Nabors marriage bore looking into.

Lebowitz may repudiate political affiliations in her work, but she has taken strong stands against various forms of bigotry in her private life. Several years ago *Village Voice* columnist Arthur Bell was harassed by police for holding hands with another man in public (the official charge was jaywalking); Lebowitz witnessed Bell's arrest and testified on his behalf in court. "Poor Arthur," she recalls, "he didn't do himself much good on the stand—he showed up looking like lasagna in a suit and kept crying in front of the judge." Still, Lebowitz stuck it out, testifying on several occasions, and Bell won a minor victory: The jaywalking charge was dropped and one of the policemen involved was suspended for a few days. Not a political person, but certainly, as Laurie Colwin says, a moral one. Moral, but not religious. When asked her faith, Fran replied: "I do not believe in God. I believe in cashmere."

"I do not believe in God, I believe in cashmere."

Many critics have felt that Fran's work now deserves a more illustrious home than the back page of *Interview* (which Laurie Colwin calls "the *People* magazine of the pretentious"); *The New Yorker* is often suggested. Lebowitz has been contacted by *New Yorker* representatives, but she feels that "there's not much to like there except the paper quality. It used to be a wonderful magazine, a place for real writing, but it's gotten too dull. Even its young writers write like they're 60 years old."

So Fran is hanging on to her column in *Interview* (which has been cashing in on her success with posters all over New York), and working on her next book, another collection of essays tentatively called *Social Studies*.

Recently she was a guest on *Woman '78*, a television talk show broadcast in New England. She appeared at the studio, in her jeans and Brooks' Brothers ensemble, expecting some sort of vaguely feminist forum, as the title might lead one to believe. But no: *Woman '78* was filmed on a set decorated to resemble a suburban patio, complete with webbed chaise lounges in demure pastels and a great deal of carefully pruned shrubbery. The hostess, Pam King, wore a crisp pink shirtwaist, an entire season's line of Sarah Coventry costume jewelry around her throat and make-up that appeared to consist of equal parts cosmetics and canned frosting.

The first guests on the program were 25 seven-year-olds from an elementary school in Methuen, Massachusetts. They arranged themselves around the polyester pant-suited figure of their teacher (with guitar) to sing an original tribute to their hometown entitled "I Love Methuen." The studio audience, a gang of elderly women in gloves and hats, adored the youngsters, who, alas, knew no more songs (an increased repertoire would require a mass uprooting to Wellesley Hills for further inspiration). During the commercial break Pam King introduced another guest, a doctor who would speak on the dangers of drug addiction among housewives. As a warm-up, Ms. King queried the assembled dowagers. "Girls, let's be frank—who here today has used Valium? Nembutal? I want to see hands! Librium? Lithium? Thorazine?" Very few hands went up, so Pam made a personal confession: "Girls, I'm going to be honest with you, and I want *your* opinion. Once, when I had a chicken bone caught in my throat, the doctor had to give me a little Darvon in order to get it out. Does that count as drug use? Does it?" There was a flurry of conversation, and one righteous matron finally exclaimed, "No, Pam, that doesn't count! That was for MEDICAL REASONS!!" Pam looked visibly relieved: "Oh, thank God!"

Ms. King then turned her attention to Fran, who refused to lie down on her chaise, preferring to squat upright. Pam reclined and enjoyed a tall lemonade with a decorative straw while fanning herself with a rice paper sheet with a pagoda painted on it. "So, Fran," she began, "Why do you write? Is there some sort of inner pain?" "I write primarily to make money," Fran replied. "Between me and welfare is writing."

An audience member whispered to her blue-haired companion, "Welfare? What an unpleasant young woman." Pam seemed to sense this wave of audience discomfort and shrewdly opened her copy of *Metropolitan Life* to choose a more promising subject for conversation. "So, Fran, I see you write about plants. We have many lovely plants here on our set. How do you feel about plants?" "I hate plants. I don't think they belong inside, especially in apartments. It would be like walking into a forest and seeing a Breuer chair." "What's a Breuer chair?" the floral print in the third row asked her friend in the sensible navy suit. "I haven't the vaguest notion—maybe it has to do with coffee. But I guess they don't have them in forests." Fran continued: "I don't think plants should be treated like children, spoken to, or sent to college." "My, she's testy," the navy suit decided. "A little make-up wouldn't hurt," agreed the floral.

Fran left the studio muttering, "They hated me. They HATED me."

Despite her book's popularity, many people do find Fran's work "relentlessly chic, trendy and holier-than-thou," as *People* magazine claimed in a recent review. It is probably these detractors who keep Lebowitz honest, who make her remember that there is a risk involved in personal, smarty-pants commentary, no matter how clever or well written. She will always offend someone; who cares? The joke is what counts. She thinks for a moment and says, "You know, someone once said that Dorothy Parker had wasted her life wisecracking. I really can't think of a better use of a life." ●

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The Iceberg Cometh

It takes a mighty rich thirst to consider using icebergs as a source of fresh water

by Jeff Wheelwright

Sometime within the next 10 years a small fleet of tugboats and tankers will sail to the coast of Antarctica and surround an iceberg. The iceberg will be about a half-mile long, 400 yards wide, 250 yards thick. It will weigh in the neighborhood of 100 million tons.

Approaching gingerly, the men on the ships will lasso the iceberg with steel cables. They will tie it up in a special harness. Finally, they will drag their hulking catch home, perhaps to Australia, perhaps to California, perhaps to Saudi Arabia. The cost of this undertaking will be around $70,000 for each day that the iceberg is in transit. If the destination is to be the Northern Hemisphere, the iceberg will be in transit for approximately a year. Its cruising speed will be about one knot.

There is no harbor remotely capable of receiving an object that extends 600 feet beneath the surface. The iceberg will be tethered several miles offshore. A thin plume of fog will settle above it in a permanent microclimate. Some of its mass will have melted or fragmented en route; the rest will be broken down by dynamite, lasers, supersonic flame jets, electrothermal knives, rock crushers and/or sprays. In the end the iceberg will revert to its original and most prized state—fresh water. Water so pure a chemist would swear it was distilled.

It requires an unusual combination of wealth and thirst to seriously contemplate using icebergs as a source of fresh water. Only a nation that has no rivers or lakes and only four inches of rain per year, whose people drink imported water that costs them as much as oil, could afford to. But for just that reason the Saudi Arabians can. Currently, the oil-rich country spends nearly $3.5 billion a year just to desalinate sea water.

The man most responsible for water projects is Prince Mohamed al-Faisal, nephew of the present king of Saudi Arabia and son of the late king. Faisal ran his country's desalination program for 15 years, but last year he resigned and switched to icebergs. He had become convinced, even as he pushed ahead with desalination, that fresh water from icebergs could be delivered to Saudi Arabia at half the cost of fresh water from the sea.

There are a number of other characters, and other countries, with an interest in icebergs, but is is safe to say that without Faisal there would be no iceberg story. His enormous financial resources enable him to dictate the course of events. Faisal's personal wealth can only be guessed at, but it certainly runs to the tens of millions. In addition, he directs the King Faisal Foundation (named for his father), whose estimated assets of some two billion dollars make it the world's richest. He controls three Mideast banks, each capitalized at $40 million. He can call on a network of wealthy relatives and associates in powerful posts throughout his country. In short, the anticipated $100 million expense of bringing an iceberg to Saudi Arabia does not seem out of reach.

Westerners find the 41-year-old Prince less aloof than most members of the Saudi ruling family. He is sometimes called the Prince of Water, a term he does not discourage because it sets him apart from all the other Princes of Oil. Educated in the U.S., at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania and Menlo Park Business School in California, Faisal wears a neat goatee and dark suits, and invariably conducts himself with urbane, quiet manners. He seeks to project no other impression of himself than that of a circumspect businessman—and so he is regarded. Thus when Faisal formed his own development company, Iceberg Transport International (I.T.I.), and then organized the First International Conference on Iceberg Utilization in Ames, Iowa, last fall, an idea that had previously belonged to science fiction immediately became very serious business indeed.

Sailing near the rim of the Antarctic Circle in 1773, Captain James Cook, the English explorer, directed members of his crew to haul aboard some of the pieces of ice he saw floating around the ship. Cook noted in his journal that 15 tons of good, sweet water were obtained from these iceberg fragments, though he described the melting process as "a little tedious." Cook's is the first recorded use of icebergs as a water supply.

In the late nineteenth century Chilean sailors reportedly towed small iceberg fragments from Chile's southern coast to points as far north as Peru, a distance of over 2,000 miles. The Humboldt Current would have supplied most of the power for this remarkable feat—if it did in fact occur. It was reported in a letter from a Chilean to an American oceanographer named John Isaacs in 1956, and no one then or since has been able to confirm it. But Isaacs, in proposing the idea anew, inspired two technical studies on the feasibility of

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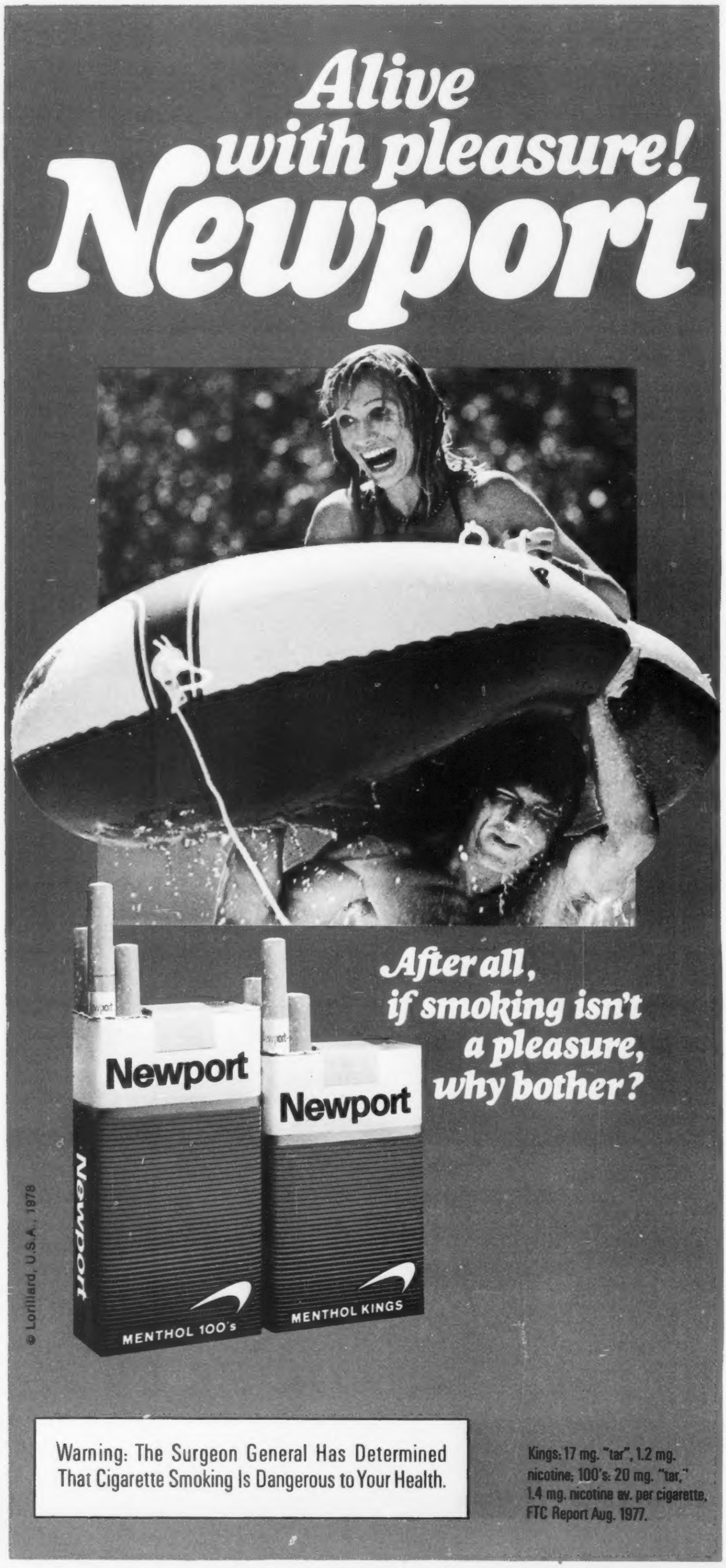
Freelance writer Jeff Wheelwright, who lives in New York, specializes in science and nature reporting.



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icebergs as a fresh water resource, one by the RAND Corporation and one by the U.S. Army. Both studies were published in 1973, and these in turn attracted the interest of Prince Faisal.

On September 30, 1977, a pair of frogmen plunged into an Alaskan lake and swam to the side of a tiny blue iceberg. The berg was the right size—about six feet long, four feet wide, and four feet thick. The divers looped a heavy sea net around it and signaled to a helicopter, which lifted the berg from the water and flew it to the airport in Anchorage. There it was packed in dry ice, fitted into a custom-made Styrofoam box and flown by jet to Minneapolis. It was then loaded onto a freezer truck and driven to Iowa State University in Ames, just in time for the opening of the First International Conference on Iceberg Utilization.

Not only was the water exceptionally pure, but they discovered that when chips from the iceberg were mixed in a glass of alcohol, they made an especially fine cocktail

According to Dr. Daniel J. Zaffarano, a vice president of the university and general chairman of the conference, the iceberg was brought to Iowa to subject it to tests and make an impression on those at the conference who had never seen one. The tests proved what everybody already knew—that an iceberg is very hard, but when it melts it makes exceptionally pure water. Participants also discovered that when chips from the iceberg were mixed in a glass with alcohol, they made an exceptionally fine cocktail.

For the second point alone, the iceberg certainly made an impression. Sitting in its special container, it hissed and popped dramatically as it released 10,000-year-old bubbles of compressed air. But was it worth the $14,000 it cost to procure it? "We got a lot more iceberg than we needed," conceded Zaffarano. "It kind of *grew* on us." Fortunately, Faisal and another Saudi had promised to pick up the tab. Faisal also contributed $50,000 to help pay for the conference itself. (Lesser amounts came from the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Coast Guard and several Saudi groups.)

Since the subject of iceberg utilization is so broad and speculative, invitations had been sent to representatives of a number of different disciplines. There were glaciologists, meteorologists, oceanographers, futurists, sea captains, sociologists and international lawyers. Among the most prominent participants were Dr. John Hult, co-author of the 1973 RAND study and now an entrepreneur seeking to bring an iceberg to California; Dr. Wilford Weeks, a glaciologist with the U.S. Army's Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (C.R.R.E.L.) and co-author of the other 1973 study; Dr. Henri Bader, former head of C.R.R.E.L. and probably the leading U.S. glaciologist; Dr. Richard Cameron, chief polar glaciologist for the National Science Foundation; several Australian scientists interested in icebergs for *their* country; and the enthusiastic team of Frenchmen and Saudis who make up Faisal's Iceberg Transport International.

There were less reputable figures, too: promoters and manufacturers hoping to sell their wares to the Prince. One was pushing polyethylene film in which to wrap an iceberg, another had the latest desalination equipment, a third wanted the Prince to invest in his hamburgers. Most of these people were kept at bay, however, by Faisal's thick screen of secretaries and aides.

The conference opened with a deliberately discouraging speech delivered by glaciologist Henri Bader, who is skeptical about iceberg utilization. Bader shared the concern of Zaffarano and others that the conference should examine the idea soberly and scientifically. His speech, which stressed the statistical improbability of the task, was intended to dampen whatever dizzy optimism had been engendered by the presence of the wealthy Saudis and their happily popping iceberg.

Thus chastened, the participants went to work. They found they could agree on a number of points. The first was that fresh water from icebergs makes economic sense only for low-lying, arid regions near a coastline: the Mideast, Australia, parts of Africa, and the west coasts of North and South America.

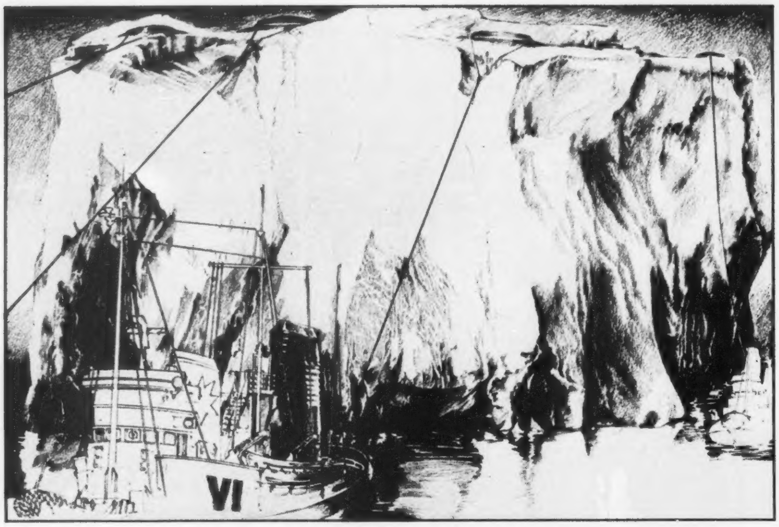
Secondly, although icebergs are common at both poles, Antarctic icebergs are preferable. The glaciers in Antarctica tend to form flat-topped, or tabular, icebergs, which are more stable in the ocean than the irregularly shaped North Pole bergs. Also, Antarctica produces far more of them than the Arctic. In fact, 72 percent of the fresh water in the world—counting surface water, underground water and icecaps—is bound up on the Antarctic continent. The water falls in the form of snow, compresses over the years into ice, and over the centuries flows toward the ice shelves at the edges of the continent. One of these, the Ross Ice Shelf, is the size of Texas. It regularly unlooses, or "calves," tabular icebergs the size of Rhode Island.

The larger bergs soon break up into smaller bergs, and for most of the year they are immobilized by the sea ice that surrounds the continent. (Unlike icebergs, sea ice consists of frozen salt water, from six to ten feet thick.) As the sea ice advances and retreats with the seasons, a few icebergs escape to the open ocean, where they may drift about for years, like blinded leviathans, before finally fracturing and melting away.

The participants agreed that satellite photography would make it easier to locate an iceberg of the appropriate size. It would have to be wider than it is thick, so that it wouldn't roll over in the water. John Hult, the engineer behind a plan to bring icebergs to California, proposed to take a square berg measuring between 300 and 500 yards on a side. The thickness, which is nearly constant

The Prince of Water: A giddy Mohamed al-Faisal at the iceberg conference

WIDE WORLD



Iceberg Inertia: 24 hours to reach full towing speed; 24 to stop

in tabular icebergs, would be about 250 yards. Faisal's group is more ambitious; they want to start with icebergs up to a mile long.

The conferees concluded that the month of March, when the sea ice encircling Antarctica retracts to its furthest point, would be the best time to move in. Icebreaker vessels would free the berg from the sea ice, opening the way for tugboats to nudge it to the open ocean, where it would be harnessed. A few years ago, three U.S. icebreakers were able to move a large iceberg that had been blocking a channel near an Antarctic base. And off the coast of Newfoundland, single tugs have looped cables around small bergs and pulled them away from offshore drilling platforms.

At this point in the conference, serious doubts were expressed by sea captains, who stressed how dangerous this maneuver would be. They warned that the high winds and rough seas common at those latitudes could dash the tugboats against the crushing rim of the sea ice. They pointed out that the iceberg would be a thousand times larger than the Arctic bergs being towed off the coast of Newfoundland. What the men on the ships would see—a white, craggy cliff 100 feet high—is indeed just the tip of the thing. Over 80 percent of the iceberg's height is hidden below the surface. If two of these bergs were placed on top of each other on the island of Manhattan, their combined height would be just short of the Empire State Building's. Henri Bader and other glaciologists echoed these warnings, but the consensus seemed to be that selecting and harnessing an iceberg was technically feasible.

Some legal and environmental obstacles were raised, but these proved easier to overcome. One was the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, which prohibits its signatories from commercially exploiting the region. However, as Dr. Cameron of the National Science Foundation pointed out, the treaty only affects the land mass of Antarctica, not the area 200 miles offshore where an iceberg would be acquired. "For these purposes," Cameron said, "an iceberg may be considered an abandoned ship. It can be salvaged by whomever wants it. When and if iceberg harvesting becomes a major industry, international regulations would presumably be drawn up."

There was a question about whether the heavy cropping of icebergs would exhaust the overall supply. The answer here is no, because icebergs are forever renewable. Antarctica is in hydrologic equilibrium—the water it loses in icebergs is replaced in full by falling snow.

Due to a quirky phenomenon known as the Coriolis force, an iceberg bound for California would have to aim for Europe to keep from ending up in Japan

John Hult estimated that two thirds of the icebergs discharged every year could be readily harvested. That's about 800 cubic kilometers of ice, enough to cover 150 million acres of farmland with four feet of water.

So much for the easy questions. Looming ahead is one more crucial operation, upon which the success of the whole project depends; and here the conference participants either threw up their hands or threw caution to the winds. For the iceberg must be insulated against melting. It takes only a rudimentary knowledge of glaciology and thermal kinetics to understand that an iceberg towed from Antarctica to the Northern Hemisphere will dissolve away to nothing long before it reaches its destination. The floating iceberg must be shielded from the heat of the warmer water, especially near the Equator. Day by day, this convected heat would erode the berg at the waterline and cause it to calve, repeatedly and perhaps disastrously.

Glaciologist Cameron explained the dangers of an iceberg scattering into hundreds of pieces in the middle of the Pacific. The smaller chunks, called "growlers," would pose the greatest threat. Barely visible at the surface, growlers are capable of punching huge holes into unsuspecting ships. "How would the shipping lanes be cleared of ice, and by whom?" Cameron asked. "If iceberg transport becomes an industry, a whole new category of marine insurance will be required. How will the liability for accidents be established?"

Protecting an Antarctic iceberg from falling apart will almost certainly require a leap into new technology. One of Faisal's I.T.I. scientists proposed a kind of canvas covering, but this was dismissed as being not nearly strong enough. In general, the I.T.I. presentations were found technically deficient by the other specialists at the conference. Privately there was even ridicule: "Their ideas stink," said one American glaciologist. It was becoming apparent that Prince Faisal had a long way to go if he hoped to get an iceberg.

Partly for this reason, John Hult's plan to bring icebergs to California drew greater attention. Hult claimed to have the answer to the insulation problem. In fact, he had answers ready for *all* the problems of iceberg transport, and his engineering credentials could not be dismissed. Sixty-one years old, with a Ph.D. in physics from Ohio State, Hult worked for the RAND Corporation for 25 years. He became a specialist in electronic engineering and has designed top-secret, remote-control systems for NASA and the Defense Department.

In 1969 Hult and RAND colleague Neil Ostrander came across John Isaacs' iceberg studies. In 1972 they secured a grant from the National Science Foundation to explore the feasibility of bringing icebergs to Southern California. During the course of his study, Hult formed his own company, Application Concepts and Technology Association (A.C.T.A.), to develop the idea further. Ostrander and two others became shareholders. For the past several years Hult has been trying to raise the $30 million he says it

Illustration: Black Star

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IT'S PEOPLE WHO GIVE DRINKING A BAD NAME.

will cost to bring the first iceberg to Los Angeles. Faisal would seem to be a likely sponsor for this pilot project, but to Hult's continuing disappointment, the Prince has declined to back Hult's private project.

Hult and Faisal thus came to the conference as competitors. It was not an equal competition—"You don't jockey with Faisal," observed one participant—but Hult at least felt more certain of his techniques. Nothing gives the trim, tall, vigorous Hult greater pleasure than to explain his ideas, each point delivered in the rolling, excitable drawl of his Oregon boyhood. His style contrasts nicely with the inscrutable reserve of the Prince. Whereas Hult will take any question and trample it to death in reply, there are many questions Faisal will refuse to answer—such as anything to do with his finances—and some he will refuse to recognize.

Hult talked confidently about his project, but he was careful not to reveal too many technical details, lest Faisal's Frenchmen appropriate them for I.T.I. "Some of the French would grab off every idea we had," he said later.

What Hult did disclose—in response to the critical insulation problem—was a self-regulating system of tough plastic wrappings that he claimed would limit calving and melting losses to 5 percent per year. The plastic would be applied in two layers. The first layer, which he calls the "underpants," would consist of long sheets about 30 yards wide, lined with inflatable tubes. Starting near the top of the berg, the inflating process would unroll each sheet down one side, around the bottom and up the other side. The sheets would overlap like fish scales. Underwater TV cameras would monitor the progress of the wrapping, and adjustments could be made by remote control. The air in the tubes would lock the sheets together and hold them tightly against the iceberg's underside. At the same time, the inflated tubes would push the sheets a few inches away from the iceberg's surface. Sealed from the outside, this space would then fill with melt-water, much the way a diver's wet suit lets in a layer of water, and this would provide further insulation. Finally, temperature monitors inside each tube would indicate whether any of the sheets had torn and needed replacing. The second layer, called the "overskirts," would be of similar design, but these sheets would be filled with seawater and draped from the top of the berg to a point below the waterline.

Hult estimates that it will cost $4 million to design and produce his plastic swaddling. And he concedes that his insulation would not eliminate the calving problem, just reduce it. "I don't know what we'd do about the calves that do result," he says. "They wouldn't last too long. This is why we'd like the Coast Guard around. They could station floats around them until they melt. In this pilot phase, we know we could protect international shipping." He concludes with a favorite argument: "Anyway, this is the point of a pilot project—to find these things out. You don't really know what will happen until you try it."

Compared to the harnessing and insulating, the actual transporting of the iceberg was thought to be rather simple. Still, as glaciologist Wilford Weeks put it, "There are some nasties here, too." Ten or twelve ocean-going tugs could do the job, or, in Hult's plan, one supertanker. He has in mind the ***Manhattan***, the largest tanker in the U.S. merchant fleet.

> **"With the Saudis involved, the international ramifications of this thing are tremendous. Put the two together, oil and water. Think of it!"**

The chief concern here is the cost of energy. Hult has calculated that towing his iceberg to California would burn up 80,000 tons of fuel oil, at a cost of $6 million. (In his presentation to the conference, Hult said that this cost might vary "depending on sources of supply and market conditions." Presumably he was talking to the Saudis in attendance.) Crew and other operating costs for the year-long journey would add another $14 million.

The disadvantage of all these vessels is that their propeller systems are not designed for the slow speeds and large forces that would be required. At one knot, the towing ships would be operating at an efficiency rate of about 5 percent, an extremely wasteful ratio in terms of fuel consumption. Instead, huge, slow-moving propellers are needed. Faisal himself addressed this point at the conference. He proposed that paddle wheels be mounted on the sides of the iceberg; they could be powered by generators on top of the berg. A fine idea, everyone agreed, but only the fabled treasures of Araby would be rich enough to overcome the massive engineering problems involved. Faisal's proposal—scientifically apt, but economically absurd—heartened the promoters (Say, Prince, take a look at these hamburgers . . .), but it didn't help his standing among the serious participants.

Whatever the means of transport, it was generally believed that the iceberg's speed should not exceed one or two knots. Any greater speed would require disproportionate additions of towing energy because the berg's resistance would increase geometrically. Also, one knot works out best for a one-year harvest and delivery cycle. By the time the icebergs arrived at their destination it would be time to harvest next year's crop in Antarctica.

The iceberg's inertia would be such that it would take almost 24 hours for it to reach full speed; and when the power was cut, the berg would not stop moving forward for a whole day. Changes in course must be anticipated by many hours, for the iceberg would take that long to respond. The expedition would have a computerized navigation plan that could take into account currents, winds and weather days before the iceberg encountered them.

And just to keep things interesting, there is a quirky physical phenomenon known as the Coriolis force. Caused by the earth's rotation, the Coriolis force pulls objects moving in the Southern Hemisphere to the left, and objects moving in the Northern Hemisphere to the right. It is strongest near the poles, and diminishes to nothing at the Equator. To compensate for it, the iceberg would have to be towed on a course 45 degrees to the right of the desired route. An iceberg from the Ross Shelf bound for California would have to aim for Europe in order to keep from ending up in Japan.

The proceedings of the conference proved what most of the participants had known in advance—that iceberg utilization promises to be a technological nightmare. Although they still thought the project feasible in some form, the participants doubted the practicality of Hult's scheme, not to speak of Faisal's scatter-shot ideas. There were too many unknowns, too many risks.

Enter now the Australians. They proposed to test the idea by transporting an uninsulated iceberg from Antarctica to the western coast of Australia, parts of which are as dry as Saudi Arabia. It would be a relatively short sprint (two months) through cold water, and an uninsulated berg would probably arrive only half melted. The advantage of this course is that it would test the harnessing and towing phases of the operation, while putting off the more difficult problem of insulation. If an iceberg could somehow make it as far as Australia, the task of wrapping one up and bringing it to the Northern Hemisphere could be undertaken later. The American glaciologists—Bader, Cameron and Weeks—favored this plan.

In the eight months since the conference, the one major development has been Faisal's implicit endorsement of its

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conclusions. I.T.I. will apparently try for Australia. The company's managing director, Georges Mougin, met this spring with Australian government officials and scientists to discuss possible delivery sites. Another Faisal aide is in the process of making plans for a second international iceberg conference, to be held in Adelaide, South Australia, next February.

During a visit to New York in April, Faisal told the *New York Times* that I.T.I. could deliver an iceberg to "any customer" within two years. He said his technical team had developed "a belt made of cement columns and a plastic mesh screen" to protect the berg during transport. Considering their lack of expertise in Iowa, it is doubtful that Faisal's engineers could have solved the insulation problem so soon. Rather, his remarks seem to indicate that I.T.I. first wants a customer, and *then* it will develop the technology. Faisal has not yet backed up his optimism with a major commitment of his own funds. It may be that he likes the idea more than he understands it, and that he will continue to make flashy gestures and optimistic pronouncements (which cost him relatively little) in order to maintain the project's momentum until somebody figures out a practical way to make it work.

Where does all this leave John Hult? After the Iowa meeting Hult gave up on the hope that Faisal would help underwrite his project. He went back to Los Angeles and unleashed a dynamo named Terry Spragg. At the time, Terry Spragg was the world's most enthusiastic promoter of icebergs as a potential water supply for California. A public relations man by profession, and a razzle-dazzle political operative, Spragg invested in Hult's company on the promise that he could sell the idea to the state of California, to the U.S. government, to the American people and even to Prince Faisal.

Thanks to Spragg's energetic efforts in California, the state legislature unanimously passed a resolution at the end of March endorsing Hult's project and urging the federal government to do the same. Spragg then turned his attention to Washington. "Public financing is out of the question right now," he said, "so the first thing I'd like to get is a sense-of-the-Congress resolution, the way we did in California. We know the government isn't really ready for this project, because no one agency or committee has jurisdiction over something like this. But I have an idea about that. We'd create another executive department—have a Secretary of Iceberg Transport, something like that. And then we'd work on the international level, the Antarctic Treaty and all. You know, with the Saudis involved, the international ramifications of this thing are tremendous." His voice was now crackling happily. "Put the two together, oil and water. Think of it! Let your mind wander!"

At the same time, Spragg took Hult's idea to William Morris Agency, Inc., the Beverly Hills theatrical company that represents everyone from President and Mrs. Ford to Secretariat. William Morris president Sam Weisbord became giddy when he thought about icebergs as a commercial property.

"The book is my first priority," Weisbord said. "Dr. Hult has submitted an outline. It'll be nonfiction, written for the layman. We'll sell it all around the world. Then, we'll see how it goes, maybe a fictional book will be next, or we'll go right to a movie script. This idea gives rise to all sorts of marvelous speculation. Speaking theatrically now, it may be appropriate to give this iceberg some sort of *character*, a theatrical personality. We may need some kind of *conflict* here. Maybe some evil power will hold the iceberg hostage. . ."

The books and disaster movie would provide only part of Hult's funds. He plans to sell souvenirs—water samples in berg-shaped containers and mailers postmarked from the moving iceberg

In short, Hult's new strategy is to create a public appetite for icebergs, and then invite the public to pay for them. The books and disaster movie would provide only a small part of the necessary funds, however. At the heart of his scheme is a plan to sell souvenirs—mailers, or "first-day covers," postmarked from the moving iceberg, and meltwater samples in containers shaped like miniature bergs. Hult figures that if he can sell 10 million mailers and water samples at about $3 apiece, he can pay for his whole project.

Yet he maintains that after making a reasonable profit in the initial stages, he will relinquish control of the operation. He wants others to decide how the water could best be used, whether for new irrigation systems, or new industry, or domestic consumption. "We want to develop it and package it and then turn it over to the users—the state water districts," Hult says. "In the end there's no money in it, because it's bound to be highly regulated. Once iceberg deliveries are established and people become dependent on the water, some sort of government control is inevitable."

It is difficult to reconcile Hult's commercial instinct, and his choice of Spragg as an adviser, with what seems to be his heartfelt desire to bring icebergs to the people. The crassness of his promotional schemes clashes with the high-mindedness of his scientific purpose. His partner Neil Ostrander is also puzzled. "The question is," he says, "do you want to be in the Hula Hoop business or do you want to be in the world of science?"

The one certain aspect of Hult's project is that it is directed toward a genuine need. Southern California must have new sources of fresh water; droughts are far more common there than the recent flooding suggests. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation estimates that by the year 2000 the state will be 2.7 million acre-feet short of its water requirements. The state legislature has been debating for months whether to spend $3.5 billion on new dams and aqueducts. According to a report issued last fall by the General Accounting Office, even if these facilities are built, supplies are still likely to be deficient. As the cost of water from conventional sources continues to rise, the economics of icebergs will become more and more attractive. When the rivers and aquifers of the West are exhausted, Antarctica may be the remaining source.

The iceberg story continues to take bizarre turns, as these latest developments indicate:

In Australia, iceberg fever has struck. One morning this spring, hundreds of people in Sydney rushed to their telephones to report that a towering iceberg was adrift in the harbor. It was a hoax. A local prankster had covered a barge with white plastic and piled it up with shaving cream and fire-fighting foam.

In Los Angeles, Hult reports that the movie and book deals have been delayed. He talks now of raising the seed money from shipping companies because they would stand to profit from an iceberg transport industry. If he can come up with a few million dollars, he says, he can launch his promotional campaign and raise the rest.

Meanwhile, Terry Spragg is no longer promoting John Hult's project. He now works for Prince Faisal. Asked to explain his abrupt defection, Spragg said: "I can only tell you that the Prince and I have made certain commitments to each other. I can't tell you what these are. I can't tell you what I'll be doing for I.T.I. If I said anything more, I'd be putting words into my mouth." As for his old partner, Hult? "I wish him well. He's very qualified, the top in his field, but he doesn't understand the entertainment business."●

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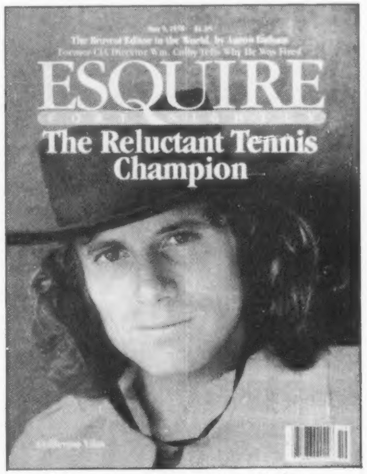

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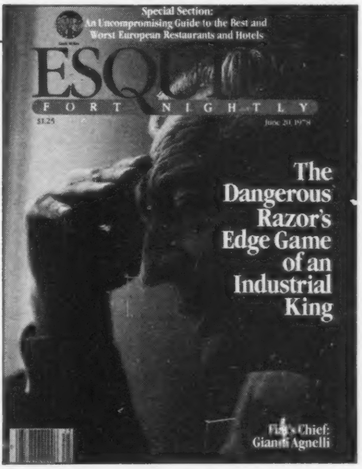
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Television/by Richard M. Levine

THE THRILL OF VICTORY

A few weeks ago I made one of those small, economical shifts of perspective that give one's world a whole new coherence without changing a thing. Like many of you, I had always tended to regard television as a communications medium, which caused me to fret needlessly about exactly *what* TV programs intended to communicate. Then I attended the ABC affiliates convention, one of those annual spring rituals at which network executives and TV station owners and managers get together at some hotel with good food and a piano bar to get the old adrenaline going for the coming season. In fact, the event resembled nothing so much as a three-day locker room pep talk with better smells. Speaker after speaker kept referring to the participants as the "ABC family," but the metaphor was hopelessly inadequate (for one thing, no family is composed of 900 middle-aged daddies). No, these were clearly players on a team of some sort. Seasons, players, teams... surely television was not so much a communications medium as an elaborate and ingenious *game*. To avoid any association with rival games, I came to think of it as "near-Monopoly."

Near-Monopoly is an exciting, fun game with simple rules that practically anybody can follow. Three teams compete against one another during a season that extends from September through March. The game comes with a magnetized programming board divided into half-hour segments. The basic idea is to place certain markers on the board in positions that score more points than the opponents' markers. The markers all have different names, but in any given season they are nearly identical, once the current theme has been chosen by common consent of the team captains. Some recent themes have been horses, police cars, hospital rooms and ethnic lawyers. Next year's entry will be women's breasts (in case you wondered why the game is sometimes referred to colloquially as the boob tube).

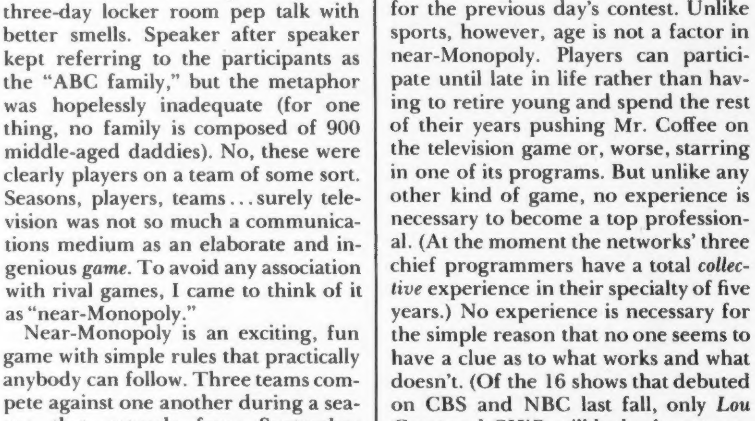
Part parlor game, part sporting event, the television game has certain clear advantages over both. For one thing, unlike most parlor games, the players always know exactly where they stand in relation to one another, since every morning their secretaries hand them the scores (called ratings) for the previous day's contest. Unlike sports, however, age is not a factor in near-Monopoly. Players can participate until late in life rather than having to retire young and spend the rest of their years pushing Mr. Coffee on the television game or, worse, starring in one of its programs. But unlike any other kind of game, no experience is necessary to become a top professional. (At the moment the networks' three chief programmers have a total *collective* experience in their specialty of five years.) No experience is necessary for the simple reason that no one seems to have a clue as to what works and what doesn't. (Of the 16 shows that debuted on CBS and NBC last fall, only *Lou Grant* and *CHiPs* will be back next season—a situation that defies the law of averages much less the application of conscious skill.) Even so, leading players in the game receive some neat prizes—over $1 million a year for NBC's new team captain, Fred Silverman, or a $400,000 bonus for a job well done for his counterpart at ABC, Elton Rule. But the best feature of near-Monopoly, the thing that distinguishes it from every other game ever devised and makes it a real joy to play, is that no one can lose. Not even a clear-cut loser ever *really* loses. Last year ABC (the winner) made slightly over a billion dollars, while CBS and NBC (the clear-cut losers) made slightly under a billion. So much for the agony of defeat.

No wonder all those people gathered in the lobby of the Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles before the start of the 1978 ABC affiliates convention were *smiling*. You could tell right away that they like the game. Certainly, the game has been good to them. Although there was an occasional leisure-suited polyester in the crowd, most of the men wore the pin-striped, wing-toed attire of affluent bankers, exuded the deep-tanned sheen of success. They looked self-assured as only people can look whose goal in life is something as uncomplicated as a 30 share and a 20 rating. Many gave the impression of being former athletes who have fended off middle-age spread through their participation in the game. For these people television is clearly the continuation of college football by other means.

This was the second year that they had won the game after decades of defeat, and their exuberance about such a state of affairs was matched by an equal measure of disbelief. Thus the need for constant reminders of their victory. Each conferee wore a silver lapel pin that read "ONE," which ABC handed out along with promotional material to prove it. There was a huge "1" on the projection screen inside the auditorium. A disco-loud sound system kept blaring out ABC's stirring theme song, "We're the One!" And in case all of the above somehow went unnoticed, the speakers at the podium reminded everyone who had won the game this season on an average of every 15 seconds throughout the three-day affair.

Vice presidents in charge of various "dayparts" marched up to the microphone to prove that their special area of concern had trounced the competition; or if that wasn't true, as was the case with ABC's daytime schedule, that at least it was way ahead with women 18–49; or if even that wasn't so, as with ABC's late-night schedule, that it was coming on strong; and, finally, if even *that* wasn't the case, as with ABC News, the claim was made that the other networks were at least gaining ground *slower* than they had in the past. The latter technique is known as putting your best toenail forward.

James Duffy, the president of the



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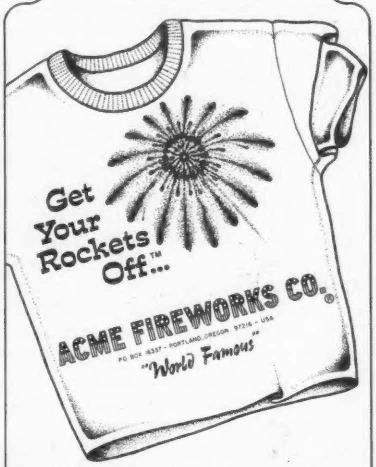

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ABC-TV network, started the ball rolling by announcing that "the obvious theme of the meeting is . . . how to exemplify leadership at its finest." He defined leadership as "creativity, responsibility and vision" ("each is a flame that can dispel the darkness and together they form the torch of leadership"), but a moment later it was clear that he had inadvertently left out an important component. "The ABC television network is now the largest single advertising medium in the world," he added, "the first to surpass $1 billion in national sales annually." He read off a list of 13 stations that had become ABC affiliates in the past year. Most of them were "switchover markets"—former CBS and NBC affiliates who clearly knew exactly what Mr. Duffy meant by leadership without him saying a word.

Next up was Roone Arledge, who had been the team's undisputed star before becoming head of news as well as sports. His new job was "a little like being Liz Taylor's latest husband," he said a bit sheepishly. "I know what I'm supposed to do, but how the hell do I make it interesting?" Then he introduced Max Robinson, one of ABC News' "regional anchors" in its new format. "I would quote Emerson," Robinson said, waxing philosophical about the inability of ABC News to improve its ratings. "Perhaps it's not so much where you stand as where you're headed—and ABC News is headed in the right direction."

Not from the evidence at hand, a half-hour "presentation" of ABC's new magazine show, *20/20*. From what I saw *20/20* appears to be a kind of news/variety show, *People* magazine set to music. The clip opened with a Jimmy Carter puppet singing "Georgia on My Mind"; and went on to interviews with Flip Wilson, Bobby Baker and a badly scarred victim of an exploded Pinto. One feature, called "Words," seemed to be Roone Arledge's brief bow to linearity; it presented a perfectly straightforward definition of "avuncular" and promised to define a new word each week. Indeed, at times the show, with its earnest mix of the instructive and the entertaining, seemed to be an adult version of *Sesame Street*. At other times it slipped into an unintended parody of a news show, *Tuesday Night Live*. Hopefully, the focus of the show will improve during its summer tryout, but right now a more accurate title might be *20/60*.

Next up to the podium was Tony Thomopoulos, the new president of ABC Entertainment, who talked about the network's schedule without once mentioning the man who made it, the old president. You may remember Fred Silverman, this season's Most Valuable Player, who ran out his contract at ABC after signing with NBC several months ago. If any of his old teammates remembered him fondly—or at all—they weren't letting on. In three days of meetings no one else mentioned his name, either. Thomopoulos, who seems to be a sailing enthusiast, took pains, however, to assure the conference that everything was still shipshape. "Creating a network schedule is like building a sailboat," he began his speech. "The boat must be strong enough to survive in rough waters, but the sails must be flexible to move with the winds."

If television is in rough waters these days, the major cause is the threat of new government regulation. The FCC is proposing to severely restrict and possibly eliminate TV advertising directed at children, a sugar-coated, half-billion dollar a year business for the networks and their affiliates. Hardly a speaker rose to the podium who did not emphasize how "responsible" children's programming had become. "Parents may not be aware of the prosocial themes and messages which are now woven into our children's programming," said Lewis Erlicht, a programming vice president. "It is not unusual, for example, to see Aquaman suggest a balanced breakfast to start the day, or Batman give safety tips."

A "specially prepared" film dealing with "the positive evolution of Saturday morning programming" was shown. It was called "Our Respect for Young People." In it there was an interview with a Minneapolis fourth-grader who had saved the life of a girlfriend choking on a piece of candy by employing something called the Heinlich maneuver. She testified that she had seen the technique on ABC's Saturday morning cartoon show "Superfriends," where Robin demonstrated it on Batman. The narrator mentioned many other examples of ABC's educational and instructional value to children. (I half expected to learn about a new kind of "children's Western"—as distinct from the standard adult shoot 'em up with plenty of "personalized violence"—that laid bare the Free Enterprise foundations of frontier life and starred a white-hatted, soft-spoken cowboy named Cash Nexus.) Just in case there was any old-style, non-educational children's program still on the air, frequent mention was made of a Yale University study funded by ABC that was designed to teach kids to watch TV more selectively. One new ABC program that the network certainly hopes kids would *not* tune out is called *Seven Wishes of Joanna Peabody*. It's about a little girl and the seven wishes she gets from a fairy godmother who magically appears on her TV set. No confusion in the network's message to children was noted.

After children's programming was dealt with, Tony Thomopoulos said that as a "special treat" we would get to see clips from "the most exciting show of the season, *Battlestar: Galactica*." A few minutes into the film it was clear that ABC had not so much eliminated traditional children's fare as scheduled it all in prime time. The show is a *Star Wars* rip-off starring special effects—lots of shots of the underbellies of flame-throwing space ships and the like—but it contained one line that epitomized the networks' current sense of being under attack from all sides and their response to the situation. Just before the evacuation of the beseiged planet Galactica, the two protagonists of the series are, for reasons not entirely made clear, at a nightclub that featured the "Android Sisters." "Every creature in the universe is out to exterminate us," one says to the others, "and you want to hire a vocal group."

Well, as they say in Hollywood, there was "lots, lots more" at the convention. The vice-president for "creative services" showed us the "versatility" of the ABC theme song by piping it over the loudspeakers in country and western, disco and big band versions. The vice-president of marketing talked about the importance of anticipating "the needs of our customers [he meant advertisers] and the needs of our customers' customers [you and me]." Another ABC vice-president said that television was "the most socially responsible and at the same time the most closely regulated industry in the nation." Elton Rule, the president of American Broadcasting Companies Inc., said that "this nation has developed a broadcasting system that is indisputably the finest in the world." The message, in song and speech, was loud and clear: We're the One!

Listening to this kind of self-promotion for three solid days is my idea of a long holiday weekend in the third rung of hell. I was glad to learn that a couple of station owners seemed to agree with me. Every so often during the worst moments of hype I'd catch sight of a fellow who was gesturing oddly to a friend across the room. He would put one fist in front of his mouth and move the other back and forth as if he were playing a slide trombone. During one of the breaks I went up to him and asked what he was doing. His youngest son was born deaf, he explained, and he had to learn sign language. That gesture was the deaf-mute sign for "bullshit." ●

Richard M. Levine is spending a year researching network television on an Alicia Patterson Foundation fellowship.

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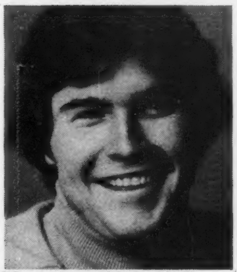

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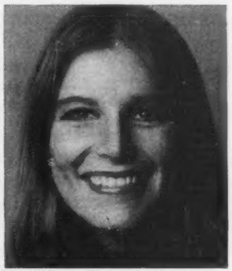

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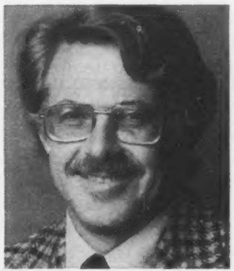

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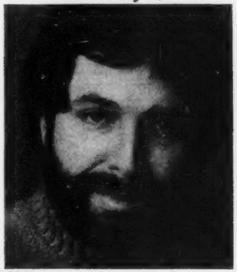

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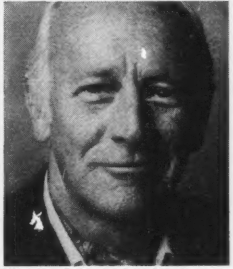

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Movies/by Richard Corliss

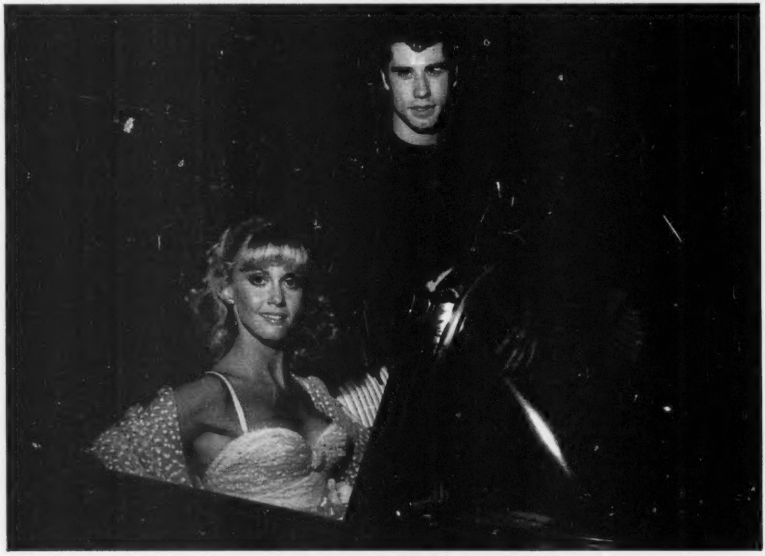
JAWS 2 AND GREASE: BEACHED WHALES

The illustration for the **Jaws 2** ad tells the story: The great white shark, with its machete-blade teeth and its dark eyes the size of bowling balls, shoots out of the water in pursuit of a smiling, water-skiing bimbette in matching golden hair and bikini. Instead of introducing new characters to face the old peril, in the manner of most sequels, this successor to the second highest grossing film of all time introduces a new genre: the beach party movie. We're back in the fictional resort village of Amity, four years after an earlier great white chewed up a lot of actors who were chewing up a lot of scenery. The film was shot in Florida, but the look of the town and its nubile inhabitants is strictly Malibu. There simply aren't that many clones of Sean Cassidy and Cheryl Tiegs in all of Massachusetts. This town is one big Cal.-Amity.

For most of its first half, *Jaws 2* alternates scenes of keen-teen bonding with intimations of police chief Roy Scheider's mortality. Again, Amity's burgher-king (Murray Hamilton) chooses to ignore the two or three suspicious water deaths and all those telltale teeth marks. Again, Scheider trawls out to destiny and a rendezvous with Moby Bruce. (Is this shark the vengeful mate of the *bête blanche* in *Jaws*? Hard to say. The sequel doesn't delve very deeply into human psychology, let alone marine pathology.) But this time Scheider's out to save his two sons and a half-dozen other representatives of Hollywood's most faithful audience.

No sequel is expected to outgross the film that inspired it; producers simply hope to scrape the remaining cream from the sides of the original bottle. They try to determine the factors in the first film's success, and then they try to duplicate them. Richard Zanuck and David Brown, the producers of *Jaws*, knew that the one moment when every moviegoer jumped out of his seat came when the head of a corpse peeped out of a sunken porthole; in *Jaws 2* there's a corpse that bobs out of the water on a rotting piece of wood. Same action, same reaction. Art can't be calculated or calibrated so precisely, but pop-culture artifacts can. The scenario for a fast-break summer movie comes as close to a science as the recipe for a fast-food chicken. If you follow the formula, the customers will come back. Forget dramatic grace, or even narrative logic; concentrate on jolting your audience with the cattle prod of special effects.

On these terms, *Jaws 2* delivers. There are many more attacks than in the original film, and about twice as many victims. (I counted six dead, three wounded.) The warning mechanism for the viewer's subconscious—John Williams' ominous shark theme—is dropped toward the climax of the film, so you never know when this malevolent Deep Throat is going to strike. Without the wizardry of director Steven Spielberg and editor Verna Fields, who made the first *Jaws* such an admirable entertainment, *Jaws 2* must abandon subtlety for the hammer-head approach; the more frequent appearances of the shark are evidence of desperation as much as calculation. Still, the scariest moment comes when nothing is happening: a girl (Ann Dusenberry) whose boy friend has just been devoured is waiting, terrified, to see if the shark is about to return for her, and murmuring to herself, "Mama, make it go away." Ten tense seconds.



Travolta and Olivia Newton-John in a movie that's only skin-deep

Photograph by Michael Childers/Sygma

For a mass-market thriller in the post-Christian era, there's quite a lot of supplication in *Jaws 2*; it features probably the first prayer ever made to the Virgin Mary to deliver sinners from a great white shark. Mind you, all this media hysteria may be a bum rap on the unsung Mr. Nice Guys of the blue water. As Travis McGee notes in John D. MacDonald's *The Turquoise Lament*, "The eerie savage predators of the deep have gotten a very bad press ... No wild creature, except perhaps the cockroach, is an experimental gourmet. Unless the food supply has disappeared, wild things want to eat what they have always eaten. Something that does not look, sound or move like anything that has even been on their menu is not about to be tasted. It might taste incredibly nasty. Why take the risk?"

It won't be long before the S.P.C.S. begins boycotts of *Jaws 2*; Zanuck and Brown may find themselves out of sequels. So I have a suggestion for them. A new menace—all the more frightening because it is invisible—stalks California. In its wake beaches are closed; policemen flee their jobs; tidy middle-class streets are suddenly inundated with garbage; forest fires go unchecked; the schools are empty. Here truly is a terror beyond the capacity of Roy Scheider to quell it. More ravenous than *Jaws 2* . . . more demonic than *The Unholy Three* . . . Good Lord, it's . . . *Proposition 13*!

I liked the Broadway *Grease*; back in 1972 it was pleasant to find a fifties revisionism so affectionate and knowledgeable, especially in the citadel of middle-aged midcult. I like the soundtrack album; it's faithful to the spirit of the original songs, and includes some energetic new material (notably

"You're the One That I Want," already a hit single.) I like John Travolta; like most of the current Italo-American fave raves, he's both threatening and vulnerable, and he gets a lot of mileage out of those runny baby-blue eyes. I even (God and Jann Wenner forgive me) like Olivia Newton-John, the human Barbie Doll; California cuteness is okay with me as long as it's imported from Australia. I do not, however, like the movie **Grease**. Travolta, executive producer Robert Stigwood and the film's other assemblers seem to have forgotten that grease is black and oily; they've remembered only that it's slick. The grace of the original production is missing; so is the grittiness of the earlier Travolta-Stigwood parlay, *Saturday Night Fever*, which attached itself to the film like a case of terminal acne, and made it seem intermittently real.

Kidnapping the mood and music of the urban lower class and exiling *Grease* to something resembling Hollywood High was a major mistake. If *Jaws 2* was partly a beach-party movie, *Grease* is a beach-party sequel: This is what the kids do in all the months with r's in them. Travolta has been detoxified; Olivia looks embalmed; and their meeting, as icons and crooners, is about the least fiery conjunction of two superstars since *Annette Sings Anka*. Only Stockard Channing, a smart comedienne whose face seems the product of the mating of Elizabeth Taylor and a duffel bag, brings some professional pizzazz to the enterprise; and only Dennis C. Stewart, with his pock-marked, lizardly face, looks as if he knows that a rumble isn't what you get in your tummy after too much champagne.

Randal Kleiser, the director, is making his feature-film debut after a successful few years helming TV's *Family* and several well-received TV movies. But he and his actors are lost in the wide-open Panavision spaces. *Grease* is, or means to be, a comedy; and movie comedy traditionally demands intercutting to give rhythm to the gags and cue the audience when to laugh. It's hard to do with a wide-screen format, especially when, like Kleiser, you don't know where to put your actors. It's even harder with a multitrack sound system that pushes the instrumentation up front and swallows much of the dialogue and lyrics. Nobody was expecting *Grease* to be the definitive rock movie (whatever that is), but it might have been more than just another Hollywood bowdlerization of a hit Broadway musical. The movie creaks with middle age; the addition of Travolta and Olivia is only cosmetic, and pointless, too—like giving a tube of Wildroot to a bald-headed man. ●

RECORDS

by Jim Miller

The difference between British and American new wave rock may reduce to the difference between rebellion and withdrawal. Figures prominent in both movements embrace the appearance of the alienated outsider. But Britons like Elvis Costello and Graham Parker bristle, expressing their feelings in no uncertain musical terms. Through their lyrics and style, they lay themselves on the line. American new wavers like Television and Talking Heads, on the other hand, often use a modish cynicism to disarm any trace of public emotion. Preferring aesthetic poses to displays of passion, the Americans withdraw behind a veil of cleverness and irony. A peculiar case in point is the Cars, Boston's latest entry in the American new wave sweepstakes.

Commercially, their debut album—**The Cars** (Elektra)—sounds like a winner. The band roars through a set of memorably tuneful tracks, replete with guitar hooks, synthesizer sweetening and the same sonic sheen producer Roy Thomas Baker brought to Queen. The result resembles a pop version of Roxy Music, redesigned by American kids to play in Peoria and sell to Led Zeppelin fans.

But these boys may be just a hair too weird—or ambiguous. The band pumps through what *seem* to be stock teen riffs, with stock titles like "Good Times Roll" and "All Mixed Up." But behind an intuitive flair for power pop lurks a sensibility torn between ironic withdrawal and the frank pursuit of fame and fortune. From Lou Reed, lead singer Ben Orr has borrowed a deadpan and rather emotionless nonchalance; the folks in the heartland fond of gee-whiz cosmology *à la* Kansas might well be disoriented. And their lyrics are deceptive. The hooks coast by so smoothly that the barbs almost get buried: "It's so easy to blow up your problems/It's so easy to play up your breakdown/It's so easy to fly through a window."

Although their cool initially put me off, I like this band. They have an apt sense of trashiness, and their unlikely merger of Velvet Underground and the Sweet is pulled off with enough panache to provoke interest. The real key is composer Ric Ocasek. His melodies are strong, his range impressive. A seamless second side helps make *The Cars* the most forceful debut album from a rock band since the Sex Pistols blew the boards clean six months ago. ●

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Music/by Steven Levy

SOOTHING THE EARTH SHOE SOUL

Michael Franks' search for the perfect shampoo brought him to New York's Palladium recently, where he opened for Bonnie Raitt at a benefit for Karen Silkwood. What he found was a restless crowd noisily looking for their seats and generally ignoring the soft, samba-like rhythms of his band—and missing most of Franks' delightfully whimsical, insidiously clever, studiously literate lyrics, sung in a voice that crosses Astrud Gilberto with Mister Rogers.

Franks, sitting on a straight-back chair and alternating between acoustic guitar and hand percussion instruments, reacted to the audience's disinterest with an apparent disinterest in *them*. The 33-year-old composer directed most of his glances at his four-piece band, and closed his eyes as he sung a verse from his "Popsicle Toes":

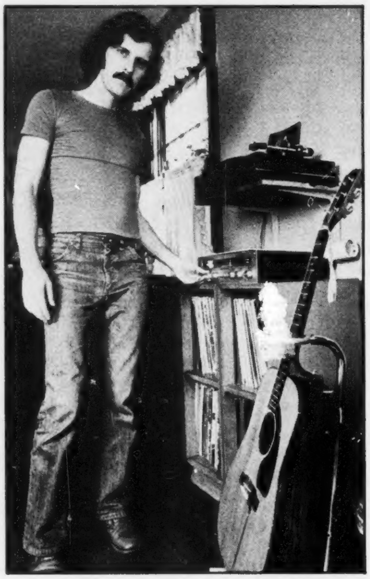
You must have been Miss Pennsylvania
With all this pulchritude,
How come you always load your Pentax
When I'm in the nude?

Pulchritude? Some people started to listen. Applause grew louder for each of the seven songs in Franks' abbreviated set, and even though he didn't get an encore, Franks probably seduced a number of concertgoers into checking out his music later.

Michael Franks had come one step closer to the perfect shampoo.

The search, of course, is a metaphorical one, detailed explicitly on a song from *Burchfield Nines*, his newest album. Franks describes the song as a "triple, quadruple entendre," as well as a recitation of the difficulties of good hair care. "I think a lot of people are in the same boat, or tub, of looking for the perfect shampoo," Franks says, a few days after the concert. "The only way I found it so far is sexually, romantically."

On stage, the search is fraught with perils, among them critics' charges that Michael Franks' manner is oppressively somnambulant. "I've been criticized for keeping my eyes closed," he says, in his lilting voice. "I suppose that's a bad habit, but it's a good way to concentrate. I sometimes forget to talk between tunes, and there's no ass-shaking, but that's not a skill I think musicians should have to develop. When people in the audience concentrate on the music, you feel a connection with them in this nonliteral, nonverbal way which is instinctual and kind of . . . bioplasmic. Music is so powerful that you can tranquilize people or excite them."



Franks: Has he never been unmellow?

Almost always, Michael Franks opts for the former. His music is jazz of the "light" variety, heavily flavored with Latin, particularly Brazilian, characteristics. It reflects his sunshiny La Jolla, California, background, and you can hear traces of his travels to South America and Japan. Franks' sound is sparse and tasteful, and his choice of musicians is impeccable—the best studio performers have recorded with him on *The Art of Tea, Sleeping Gypsy* and *Burchfield Nines*, which he describes as the "*crème de la* laid back."

But his lyrics are anything but calm. Michael Franks routinely pulls astounding verbal rabbits out of his hat, and has compiled an impressive set of autobiographical chronicles with songs like "Wrestle a Live Nude Girl," "Monkey See—Monkey Do," "Eggplant" and "B'wana—He No Home." But what can you expect from someone who's written a doctoral dissertation entitled "The Apocalyptic Vision in Contemporary Song"? Franks dismisses the paper as "bullshit, though more clever than most," and sees his real work as blending the influences of Duke Ellington, Johnny Mercer, Cole Porter, Antonio Carlos Jobim and Theodore Roethke.

On his best tunes, the academician, albeit a playful one who's long given up hopes for a degree, is still present. Words jump through Joycean hoops, and images collide in a confluent crazy salad. Franks may complain that love "just ain't like Cole Porter/It's just all too short-order," but he rhapsodizes on the subject with a burst of eclectic verbiage. When he's quarreling with his lady, he complains that

Your bananas get thrown at me
And mine get thrown at you.
Everynight we fuss and fight
Like Arabs and like Jews . . .

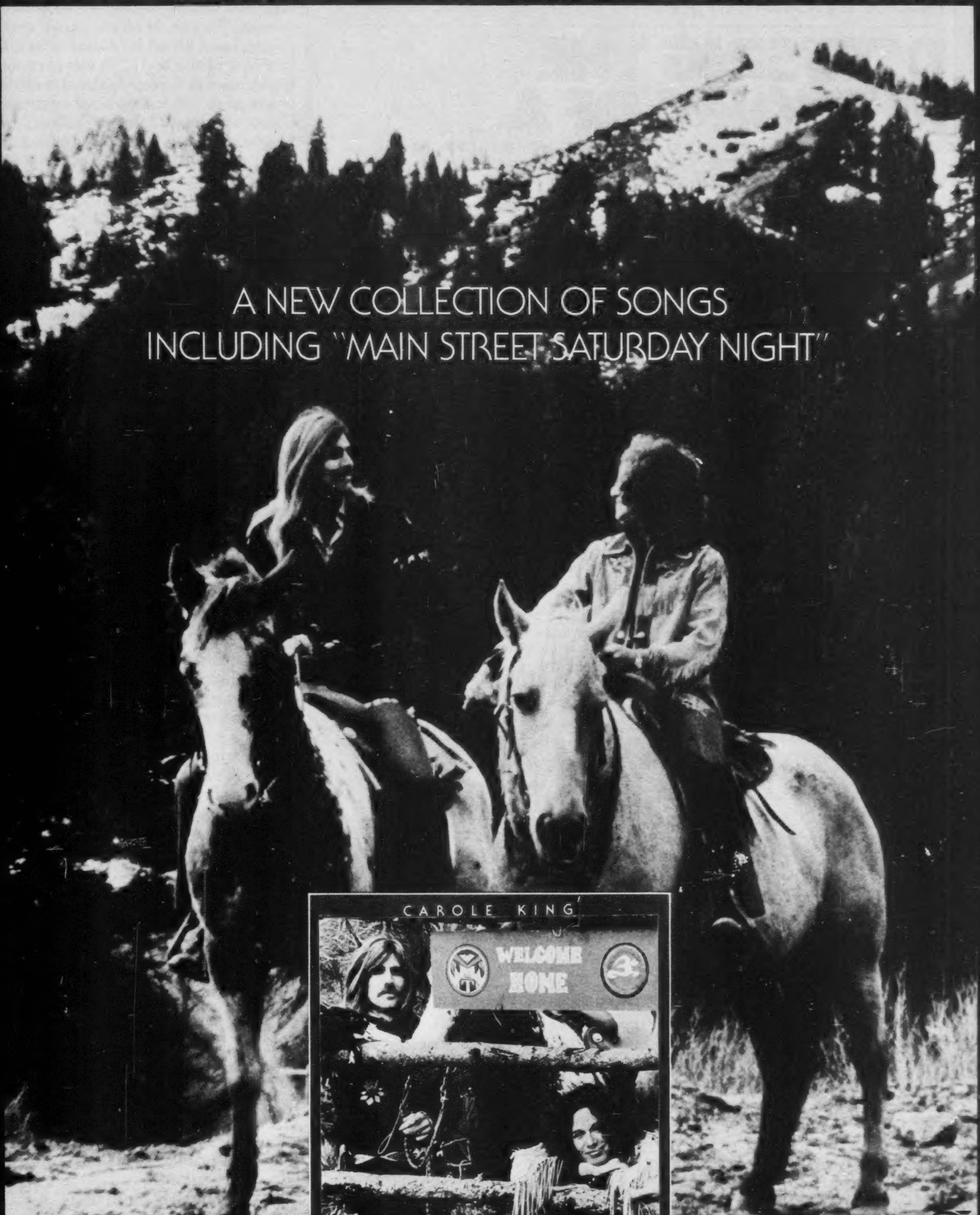
Love is only one of his lyrical concerns. On the whole, Franks' songs evoke a chic, whole-earth lifestyle that the self-described "prince of cynics" looks upon with affection and gentle teasing. His images come from modern art, astrology, movies, health food and, of course, sex. Sometimes he mixes them with amusing effect: "The lady sticks to me like white on rice/She never cooks the same way twice." It's no surprise to learn that Franks is a vegetarian who throws the I Ching daily.

"Today I threw 'Retreat,' number 33, and that's significant," Franks says, his blue eyes glowing with quiet intensity. "Because I'm going through a period of soul-searching about my career. I'm not sure how much I want to keep going out on the road. Things are going well with the record, and I'm getting lots of offers. But I'm married now (his second time around; in song he will "hear from my ex/on the back of my checks"). We recently moved to a beautiful house outside New York with two dogs, two cats, a garden . . . I'm not sure how much I want to sacrifice for a chance at mass popularity, or even acceptance by that hip minority who can be reached by my music."

With *Burchfield Nines* getting airplay on FM rock, R&B and MOR stations, and with the likes of Melissa Manchester and Ringo Starr covering his tunes, Michael Franks may not get the chance to retreat gracefully. He might even become accepted by those masses whom he considers addicts of musical and edible junk foods. "In the history of pop," he reflects, "there have always been exceptions where the tasteful things have managed to slide through." ●

Photograph by Peter Cunningham

CAROLE KING WELCOME HOME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Farrar, Straus & Giroux
(88 pp., $5.95).

Susan Sontag's first collection of essays, published 12 years ago, was original and influential. The title piece of *Against Interpretation* is especially intelligent, both learned and passionate. Sontag's subject is art, and the uses to which art is put. It seemed to Sontag then, and I can't imagine anything has caused her to change her mind, that works of art often exist as mere pretexts for exegesis, for the abuse of interpretation.

Thus the division of "content" from "form." A short story is written, a painting made, and a critic explains what it *really* means, using it as an occasion for instruction. Sontag argues that interpretation reveals "an open aggressiveness, an overt contempt for appearances." She goes further, calling interpretation "the revenge of the intellect upon the world."

Several years later, "in the heat of despair over America's war on Vietnam," Sontag wrote that "the white race is the cancer of human history." Here was interpretation with a vengeance, and the kind of metaphor-making that her current book has been written to condemn.

Susan Sontag has had cancer, and has been treated for it, though these are facts not disclosed in *Illness as Metaphor*. They are facts that matter, however, and can be inferred from the authority and desperate lucidity of this text. It is said casually of many books that every word counts. The words here are counted like heartbeats, just so many to a life. Once upon a time Sontag's prose seemed to have been translated from German. Sentences coiled back on themselves, dripped dependencies and mined their paths with parentheses. They were heavy, lugubrious, inclined to exhort or to scold. Once, Sontag's sentences were things a reader endured, like Hannah Arendt's, to get at the good stuff, her ideas.

Illness as Metaphor is tone perfect, a gorgeous, tough, clear piece of writing. I think Sontag used to write as she wrote in part from a contempt for pretty writing, for trumpery rhetoric. Nothing here is faked, or prettied. Nor, in her zeal to argue against the use of disease as a conceit for things disease is not, does Sontag deny her prose the resources of metaphor:

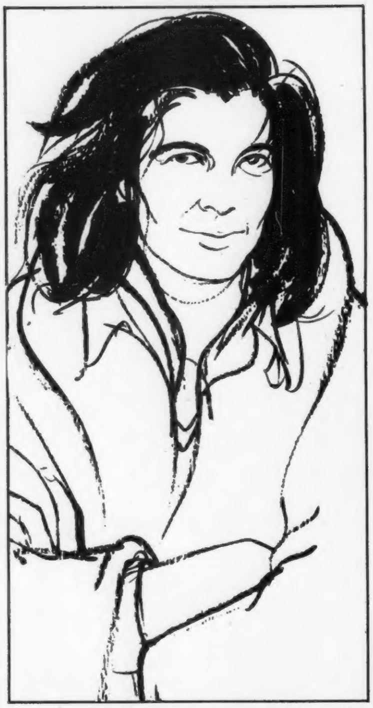


Illustration by Elizabeth Van Itallie

"Illness is the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship. Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick. Although we all prefer to use only the good passport, sooner or later each of us is obliged, at least for a spell, to identify ourselves as citizens of that other place."

Within the brief compass of this essay, Sontag considers the interpretation by society and culture and art of two territories in that "other place," tuberculosis and cancer. TB, until its cause and cure were discovered, was a stylish disease, a symptom of passion and refinement. Byron longed for it, Keats died of it. "When in *The Magic Mountain,* Hans Castorp is discovered to have tuberculosis, it is a promotion." Opposed to the metaphor of tuberculosis, "Health becomes banal, even vulgar," and illness is "a kind of interior décor of the body." It was even argued that the decline in the arts could be traced to the decline in tuberculosis.

Sontag might have looked at Kenneth Burke's "Symbolic Action in a Poem by Keats" for one of the most flamboyant, and ingenious, interpretations of the expression of consumption through a work of art. The poem is the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," composed while Keats was in the grip of a tubercular fever. Burke suggests that the fever enabled the poem, and that the process of poem-making translated the fever into a benign passion, that state of being out of one's own body that one feels during a high fever, a state Keats formulated elsewhere as "negative capability." Keats' ode identifies the physical state, "a burning forehead and a parching tongue," and from this Burke moves to a conclusion: "From the bodily fever, which is a passion, and malign, there has split off a spiritual activity, a wholly benign aspect of the total agitation."

Sontag's attention is on the malign. "Illness is *not* a metaphor." Cancer especially is not a metaphor, and its use as a metaphor has been cruel, costly and stupid, just as Sontag's description of the white race as "the cancer of human history" was stupid. Cancer is cancer, an illness sometimes susceptible to treatment, sometimes not. To mystify it is to hide from it. To make of it a metaphor is to interpose between it and its cause a mystifying agent, whether of rhetoric or superstition.

Sontag examines rhetoric, but her interest is not rhetorical. Like a good physician she is looking at symptoms to discover causes. Cancer is the dread one *because* it is hidden, by its nature an interior plague, and anything that hides it deeper from view increases its already grave potency. Cancer is a source of deep shame in its victims, and its victims' survivors. When I wrote obituaries for a daily newspaper, I was obliged to give the cause of a person's death. Two causes—suicide and cancer—were always wrapped in euphemism, the first *died suddenly*, the second *after a long illness*. Heart attack victims feel none of this shame, and Sontag investigates the source of such shame with compassion and white anger, always rationally.

"The tubercular could be an outlaw or a misfit; the cancer personality is regarded more simply, and with condescension, as one of life's losers." Pseudo-science has drawn a "cancer-prone" profile of the typical victim as unemotional, inhibited, passionless. Pallid, in fact, sickly, without vigor, not feeling quite up to snuff. Thus the victim is offered guilt together with a mortal prognosis: The poor passive sod just doesn't wish badly enough to live.

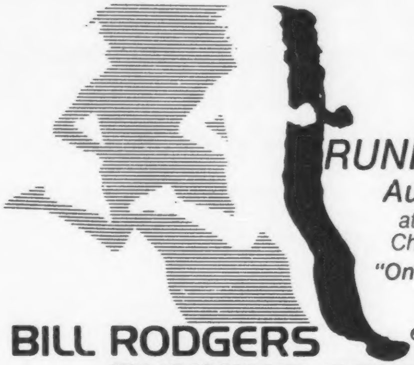
Medicine attacks cancer in locutions taken from military actions, describes it in the language of science fiction ("*Invasion of the Body Snatchers, The Incredible Shrinking Man, The Blob, The Thing*"); the political fringes invest it with paranoid fantasies of cause (fluoridation) and redemption (laetrile).

When Solzhenitsyn tried to publish his *Cancer Ward* in the Soviet Union, he explained that it was a novel about cancer: "the subject is specifically and literally cancer." No one would believe him. The cancer was surely a metaphor for Stalinism, for something? And who can wonder at such suspicion when cancer has been kidnaped as a metaphor for any ill—social, political, military, legal, economic—without much regard for the effect of metaphor-making on someone who has cancer, plain cancer?

Norman Mailer, in the preface to a collection of essays called *Cannibals and Christians*, wrote that "it has been the continuing obsession of this writer that the world is entering a time of plague. And the continuing metaphor for the obsession" (was it ever!) "—a most disagreeable metaphor—has been cancer. The argument is old by now: its first assumption is that cancer is a disease different from other diseases, an ultimate disease against which all other diseases are in design to protect us."

Why the peculiar resonance of cancer? What Mailer says is so; cancer is susceptible to metaphor, which is why he has for so long abused it as metaphor. Even Sontag attaches, I believe without irony, a metaphor to the disease: "Cancer is a demonic pregnancy." Ungoverned growth, then, creates a terror. Plus the frequent presence of the illness in "unmentionable" places, the rectum, colon, cervix, prostate, testicles, bladder, intestines. But the principal reason cancer metaphors metastasize is that no other disease quite so usefully lends itself to mystification. Everyone knows where syphillis comes from. Syphillis is not mysterious, "only awful." Gangrene is visible (though I wish Sontag had mentioned its other name, at once a bluntly accurate description and a metaphor, "mortification"), external.

Cancer is left, a tool for the analytic professions eager to promote the quackery that poor mental health invites its terrors (it was once believed by fools that happy people did not die of plague), an invitation to abandon reason, to scrim what is from what may be imagined. ●



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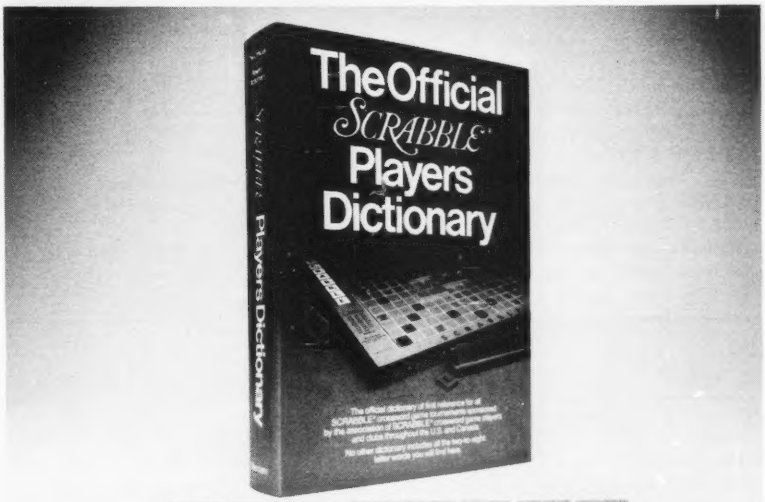

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Hello Mr. Chips/by Craig Buck

FINAL TRIBUTE

Some 5,000 years ago an Egyptian stuck a branch into the moist earth of the Nile delta and realized that the arc of its shadow could be marked off to measure time. He looked at the face of the world's first clock, and he understood that time could be used as an invisible tool to coordinate human activities, a tool that has since become vital to our survival as a species. But to Texas Instruments that historic branch was just another stick in the mud.

In 1958, TI researcher Jack Kilby invented a chip of silicon, about the size of an infant's fingernail, upon which the equivalent of 15,000 transistors and diodes could be systematically arranged like so many angels on the head of a pin. This was 20th century alchemy, turning silicon into gold. These tiny integrated circuits were known as chips, and they began flying off the old TI block at an incredible pace. Everyone in the electronics industry was infected with new-product fever.

In late 1971 the Royal Typewriter Company came out with the first hand-held digital calculator, the primitive Digital III. The race was on, and as products became increasingly sophisticated, prices gradually dropped from the $200 range to today's $10 range. The chips began to fall right and left; and it was goodbye slide rules, goodbye glass thermometers, goodbye mechanical speedometers, goodbye spring scales, goodbye TV channel dials, goodbye ringing cash registers, goodbye mechanical gauges and—yes—goodbye clock faces.

In the electronics industry, as in Las Vegas, chips stood for cash. But despite the boom, silicon chips, like their plastic namesakes, were gambling stakes. Says Werner Fischer, who was with Royal when the Digital III first hit the market, and who is now national sales manager for Canon USA, another calculator manufacturer, "Four years ago there were 200 companies marketing calculators in the U.S. Now there are five or six. Rapid technological changes and reductions in costs of production and assembly led to some pretty wild and wooly marketing. Many seemingly good businessmen were caught up in the chaos."

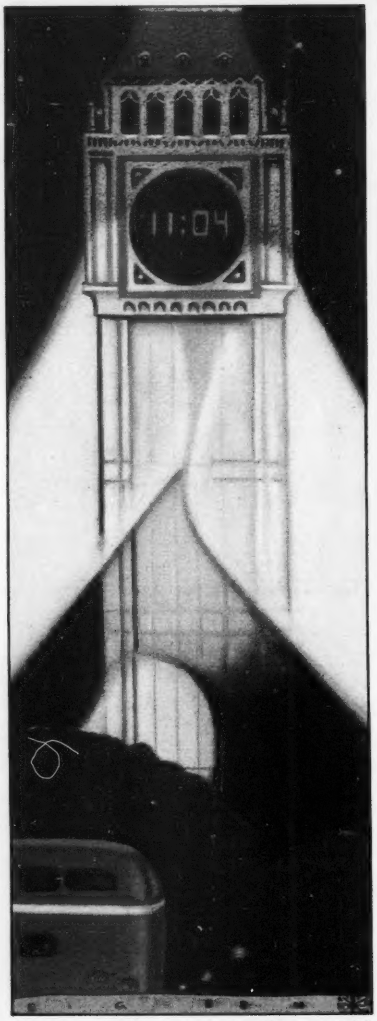

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVE CALVER

Overproduction spread like the plague. As soon as one company stocked a warehouse with new calculators or watches, a competitor would develop a method of reducing costs. The first company would be stuck with a warehouse full of overpriced or obsolete goods. Major manufacturers found themselves ruined overnight.

But shed no liquid-crystal tears for the digital electronics industry. Save them for the slide rule industry—may it rest in peace. There was a time when an engineer, chemist, mathematician or physicist felt naked without his elegant, mahogany, precision K&E (Keuffel & Esser, once the Rolls-Royce of slide rules). But university stores no longer stock slide rules, schools no longer teach their use, professionals no longer refer to them, and K&E no longer makes them. Nor does K&E's former competitor, Pickett Industries.

The slide rule has been around since 1621, when William Oughtred put two of Edmund Gunter's plotted logarithm sticks together. K&E began producing them in 1891. Three years of aging and crafting went into each slide rule. But five years ago the tradition died. Today, K&E ignominiously distributes TI calculators.

But slide rules are already extinct—what about watch faces? Surely Big Ben isn't slated for the scrap heap. Or is it? This year, between 55 and 60 million watches will be sold, of which some 40 percent will be digital. TI estimates that this slice of the market will reach 75 percent by 1980. By 1990, only nostalgians will wear watches with faces and hands, and no one under college age will be able to read them.

Glass thermometers have already disappeared from the antiseptic halls of major medical centers. In a few years automobile dashboards will look like fluorescent tickertape readouts. Our lives will be awash in liquid crystal faster than we can say "Jack Kilby."

No doubt we are gaining more accurate readouts and ever smaller equipment, but we are losing a seldom considered philosophical tool. The hands of a clock, the needle of a gauge, the hairline of a slide rule, or the liquid of a thermometer do more than just pinpoint a reading. They symbolize the concepts behind what they record, the cycles, the relativity. Just as riding a subway gives us no understanding of a city, using a calculator gives us no understanding of mathematics. We must walk a city's streets to know it, and we must plod through calculations to comprehend numbers. The face of a clock lets us see the relationship between then and now, like a map to help us plan our movements through the geography of time. But the digital watch or the calculator transports us blindly from one number to another. Numbers in a void. This is magic, not method. We regress to the mentality of centuries past, when numerical concepts were the exclusive province of the high priests.

Nonetheless, the chips are down, like the leavings of a buffalo herd. Most of us are already accustomed to this isolated-number technology. So goodbye Big Ben, wherever you are, your days are glowingly numbered. ●

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Gin Daiquiri: 2 ozs. Gordon's Gin, ½ oz. lime juice, ½ teaspoon sugar. Shake well with ice cubes. Strain and serve in cock
rocks.

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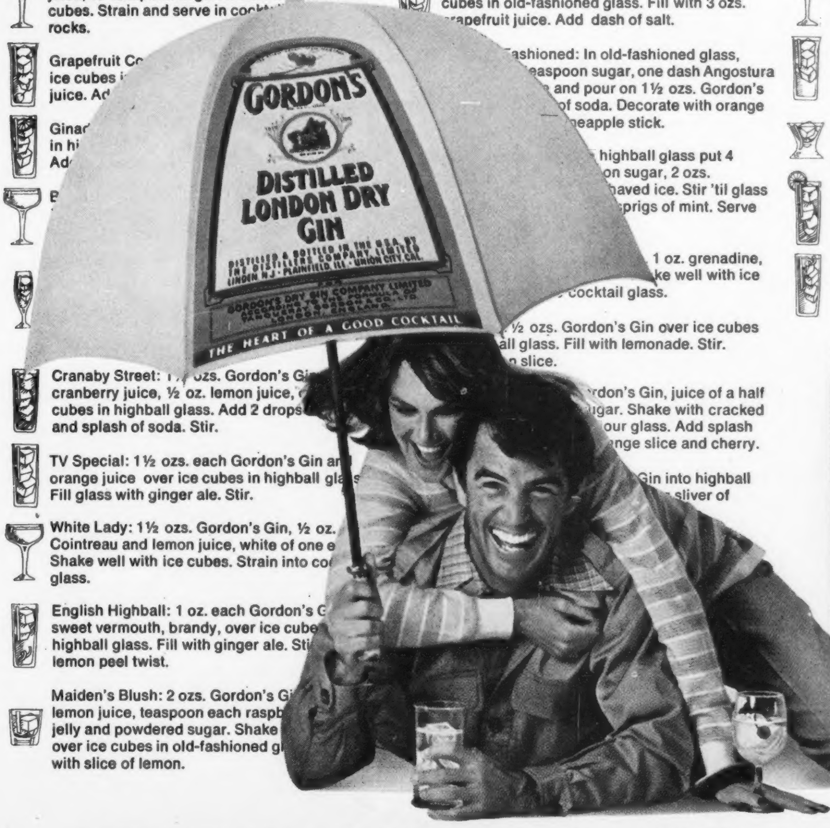
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cranberry juice, ½ oz. lemon juice,
cubes in highball glass. Add 2 drops
and splash of soda. Stir.

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orange juice over ice cubes in highball gl
Fill glass with ginger ale. Stir.

White Lady: 1½ ozs. Gordon's Gin, ½ oz.
Cointreau and lemon juice, white of one e
Shake well with ice cubes. Strain into co
glass.

English Highball: 1 oz. each Gordon's G
sweet vermouth, brandy, over ice cube
highball glass. Fill with ginger ale. St
lemon peel twist.

Maiden's Blush: 2 ozs. Gordon's G
lemon juice, teaspoon each rasp
jelly and powdered sugar. Shake
over ice cubes in old-fashioned g
with slice of lemon.

Lady Shake: 2 ozs. Gordon's Gin, 1 oz. Cointreau, ½ oz. lemon juice. Shake well over ice cubes. Strain and serve in cocktail glass.

Gin Bloody Mary: 1½ ozs. Gordon's Gin, 3 ozs. tomato juice, juice of ⅓ lime wedge. Stir well over ice.

Hawaii: 1½ ozs. Gordon's Gin and 3 ozs. pineapple juice over ice cubes in highball glass. Add cherry.

Dry Martini: 4 or more parts Gordon's Gin, 1 part dry vermouth. Stir well in pitcher over ice. Strain into chilled cocktail glass or over rocks. Option: Add lemon peel twist, olive, pearl onion.

Salty Dog: 1½ ozs. Gordon's Gin over ice cubes in old-fashioned glass. Fill with 3 ozs.
rapefruit juice. Add dash of salt.

ashioned: In old-fashioned glass,
easpoon sugar, one dash Angostura
and pour on 1½ ozs. Gordon's
of soda. Decorate with orange
neapple stick.

highball glass put 4
on sugar, 2 ozs.
haved ice. Stir 'til glass
sprigs of mint. Serve

1 oz. grenadine,
ke well with ice
cocktail glass.

½ ozs. Gordon's Gin over ice cubes
all glass. Fill with lemonade. Stir.
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rdon's Gin, juice of a half
gar. Shake with cracked
our glass. Add splash
nge slice and cherry.

Gin into highball
sliver of

Rickey: 1½ ozs. Gordon's Gin, juice from ½ lime with rind into highball glass with ice cubes. Fill with soda water. Stir.

Daisy: 1½ ozs. Gordon's Gin, teaspoon of grenadine, juice of ½ lemon, ½ teaspoon powdered sugar. Stir contents over ice cubes in highball glass. Add soda water to fill.

Gin Sour: 1½ ozs. Gordon's Gin, juice of a half lemon, ½ teaspoon sugar. Shake with cracked ice. Strain into chilled sour glass. Add splash of soda. Garnish with orange slice and cherry.

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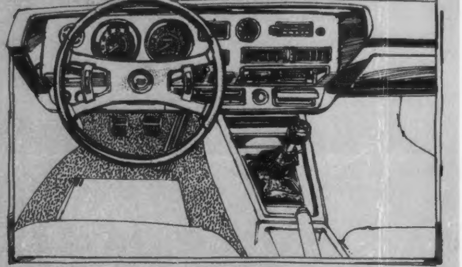

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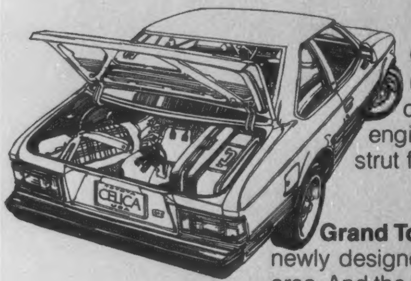

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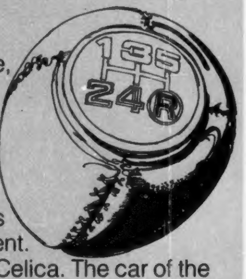

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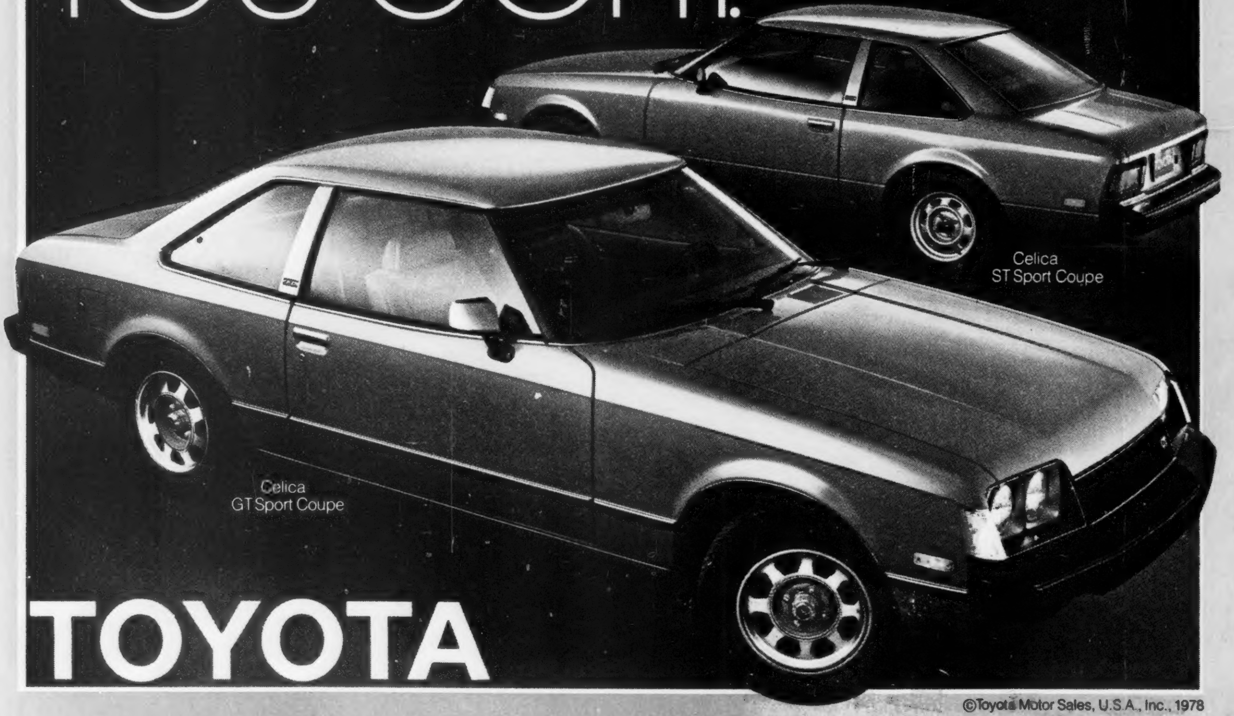

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